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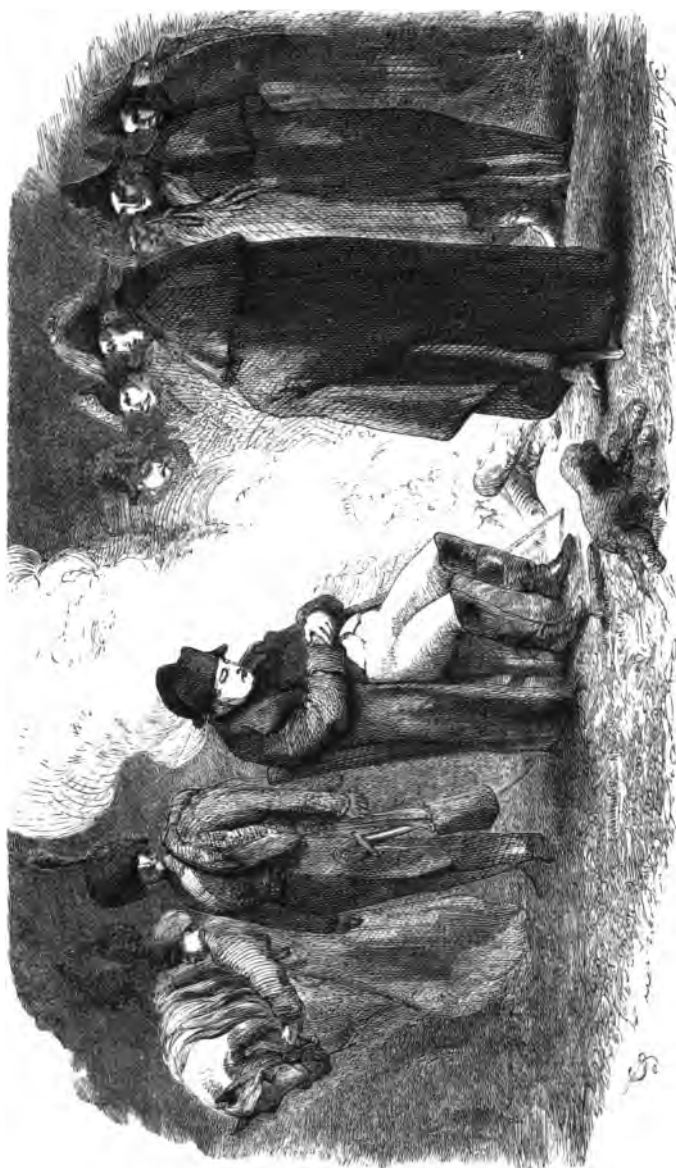
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HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM THE

COMMENCEMENT OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

IN MDCCLXXXIX

TO THE

RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS

IN MDCCCXV

BY

SIR ARCHIBALD ALISON, BART.

F. R. S. E.

NINTH EDITION

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HISTORY OF EUROPE.

CHAPTER LXXX.

CAMPAIGN OF DRESDEN.

1. THE French Revolution was a revolt not so much against the government and institutions, as against the morality and faith of former times. It professed to offer new motives of action, new rewards of courage, new inducements to exertion, to emancipated man. The old restraints of precept, duty, religion, were to be abolished. The rule of action was to be, not what is right, but what is agreeable; not what duty enjoins, but what passion desires; not what is promised—ultimate reward in another world—but what is attended in this with immediate gratification. Sedulously fanning the passions, it invariably neglected the conscience; often using the language of virtue, it as uniformly directed the actions of vice. The incalculable power of the generous affections—the elevating influence of noble sentiments, were neither overlooked nor underrated by its leaders; on the contrary, they entered largely into their policy for the government of the world. They were considered as the appropriate, and often the most efficacious means of rousing mankind—as instruments never to be despised, but on the contrary carefully used for effecting the purposes of democratic elevation or selfish ambition. But it never for an instant entered into their contemplation, that these sentiments were to

occasion any restraint upon their conduct; that the limitations which they so loudly proclaimed ought to be imposed on the power of others, should be affixed to their own; or that they should ever be called to forego present objects of ambition or gratification from an abstract sense of what is right, or a submissive obedience to the Divine commands. Hence its long-continued and astonishing success. While it readily attracted the active and enterprising by the brilliant prizes which it offered, and the agreeable relaxation from restraint which it held forth, it enlisted at the same time the unwary and unforeseeing even in the opposite ranks, by the generous sentiments which it breathed, and the perpetual appeals to noble feelings which it made. And thus, with almost superhuman address, it combined in its ranks the energy of the passions and the sacrifices of the affections, the selfishness of matured and far-seeing sin, and the generosity of deluded and inexperienced virtue.

2. The vehement passions which the prospect of unrestrained indulgence, whether of pleasure, gain, or power, never fails to excite, the ardent desires which it awakens, the universal energy which it calls forth, are for a time irresistible. If experience and suffering were not at hand to correct

these excesses, and restore the moral equilibrium of nature, it is hard to say how the career of iniquity could be stopped, save by a special interposition of avenging power, or the mutual destruction of the wicked by each other. All the passions of the Revolution, in its different stages, were the passions of sin; the strength it displayed was no other than the energy which, anterior even to human creation, had been arrayed against the rule of Omnipotence. The insatiable thirst for power which characterised its earlier stages; the unbounded desire for sensual gratification which succeeded its disappointment; the lust of rapine which sent its armies forth to regenerate, by plundering, all mankind; the passion for glory, which sacrificed the peace and blood of nations to the splendour or the power of one ruling people—were so many directions which, according to the circumstances of different periods, the same ruling principle, the *thirst for illicit gratification*, successively took. The sober efforts of industry, the simple path of duty, the heroic self-denial of virtue, were insupportable to men thus violently excited. Nothing short of the spoils of the world could gratify passions excited by the prospect of all its indulgences. When Satan strove to tempt our Saviour, and reserved for the trial his strongest allurements, he led him up to an exceeding high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the earth, and offered to give him them all if he would fall down and worship him. Memorable words! indicating at once the continued agency of the great adversary of mankind on individual conduct, and the pre-eminent strength of the temptations to achieve his conquests which were to be drawn from the social or national passions.

3. "Experience," says Dr Johnson, "is the great test of truth, and is perpetually contradicting the theories of men." It is by the ultimate consequences of their actions that the eternal distinction between virtue and vice is made apparent, and the reality of Divine superintendence brought home to the universal conviction of

men. There is a limit to human wickedness; and duty, supported by religion, generally in the end proves victorious over passion resting on infidelity. It is the moral laws of nature, unceasingly operating, which provide for this reaction—wide as may be the deviations of human ambition or wickedness from the path prescribed by wisdom or rectitude, wider still is the provision made in the unavoidable consequences of their excesses for their final overthrow, and the condign punishment of their authors. The wisdom of Providence is incessantly warring against the errors, and its justice against the wickedness of man. More than two thousand years ago, the royal bard thus sang in words of inspired felicity, "Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. For all the daylong have I been plagued, and chastened every morning. If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors."

4. Of whom were these words spoken? Of those in the days of David or of Napoleon? Twenty years of almost unbroken prosperity had reared up and consolidated the mighty fabric of the French empire, and no power on earth seemed capable of overthrowing it. Despite the catastrophe of the Moscow campaign, the genius of the Emperor had again brought victory to the tricolor standards. The triumphs of Lützen and Bautzen had steadied the wavering fidelity of his allies, and re-animated the spirit of his people: and four hundred thousand brave men were arrayed around his eagles on the Elbe, to assert and maintain the dominion of the world. Never, save on the Niemen, had Napoleon seen himself at

the head of such a force; never had Europe beheld such a host assembled over its whole breadth, for the subjugation of its independence. But within two months from the resumption of hostilities, the colossal structure was overthrown; the French armies were swept as by a whirlwind from the German plains; Spain was rejoicing in her freedom: the liberated nations of Europe were returning thanks for their deliverance: and in six months more the empire of Napoleon was at an end; the mighty conqueror was cast away in mimic sovereignty on a petty island, and the glories of the Revolution were numbered among the things that have been!

5. The way in which this extraordinary retribution was brought about, now appears traced in colours of imperishable light. It was the same false and vicious principle, pushed to its necessary consequences, which produced the internal calamities and external disasters of the Revolution. By promising and affording unbounded gratification to the passions and desires, without any regard to the mode in which it was to be obtained, that great convulsion arrayed an astonishing force of energy and talent on its side; and if these indulgences could have been obtained without involving the ruin or destruction of others, it is hard to say where the career of selfish ambition would have stopped. But honest industry, laborious exertion, virtuous self-denial, alone can purchase innocuous enjoyments; all summary and short-hand modes of obtaining them without such efforts, necessarily involve the injury of others. Robbery and plunder, accordingly, veiled under the successive and specious names of liberty, patriotism, and glory, constituted from first to last its invariable method of action. It began with the spoliation of the church and the emigrant noblesse; the fundholders and capitalists were the next objects of attack; the blood of the people was then drained off in merciless streams; and when all domestic sources were exhausted, and the armies raised by these infernal methods let loose to

pillage and oppress all the adjoining states, had failed in extorting the requisite supplies, even the commons of the poor and the hospitals of the sick were at last confiscated under the imperial government.

6. With those who were enriched by these iniquitous methods, indeed, this system was in the highest degree popular; but in all cases of robbery, there are two parties to be considered—the robber and the robbed. The long continuance and wide extent of this iniquity at length produced a universal spirit of exasperation; resistance was commenced by instinct, and persisted in from despair. From the ice of Kamschatka to the Pillars of Hercules; from the North Cape to the shores of Calabria—all nations were now convulsed in the effort to shake off the tyranny of France. A crusade greater than had been collected either by the despotism of Asia in ancient, or the fervour of Europe in more modern times, was raised for the deliverance of mankind; and sixteen hundred thousand men on the two sides appeared in arms in Germany, Spain, and Italy, to decide the desperate conflict between the antagonist principles of Vice striving for liberation from all restraints, human and divine, and Religion enjoining the authority of duty and obedience to the commands of God. The world had never beheld such a contest: if we would seek a parallel to it, we must go back to those awful images of the strife of the heavenly powers darkly shadowed forth in Scripture, to which the genius of Milton has given poetic and terrestrial immortality.

7. The armistice was denounced on the 11th, but, by its conditions, six days more were to elapse before hostilities could be resumed. It was an object, however, for the Allies to be in perfect readiness for action the moment that the prescribed period arrived; and accordingly, on the 12th, the Russian and Prussian troops, in pursuance of the concerted plan of operations, began to defile in great strength by their left into Bohemia. The junction with the Austrian troops

in the plains of Jung-Buntzlau, raised the allied force in that province to two hundred and twenty thousand men. But though this host was in the highest degree formidable, from its numbers and the admirable quality of the troops of which the greater part of it was composed, yet a considerable part of the Austrians were new levies, as yet unused to war; and the variety of nations of which it was composed, as well as the want of any previous habit of co-operation or uncontrolled direction in its head, rendered the success of any important operations undertaken in the outset of the campaign very doubtful. Hostilities were commenced by the Allies on the side of Silesia before the six days had expired. Taking advantage of some trifling infractions of the armistice by the French troops, the allied generals, in a way very questionable in point of morality, on the 14th sent a corps to take possession of Breslau, which lay in the neutral territory between the two armies, and was likely immediately to fall into the enemy's hands on the resumption of hostilities. On the day following, Blücher advanced in great force across the neutral territory, and everywhere drove in the French videttes; and their troops, surprised in their cantonments, hastened to fall back behind the Bober.

8. No sooner was the Emperor informed of the resumption of hostilities on the Silesian frontier, than he set out from Dresden, and the first night slept at Görlitz. As he was stepping into his carriage, two persons from different quarters arrived; Narbonne from Prague, with the account of the final rupture of the negotiations, and Murat from Naples, with the offer of his redoubtable sword. Napoleon had a conference of an hour in duration with the former, whom he despatched with the proposal for the continuance of negotiations during hostilities, which, as already mentioned, proved ineffectual [*ante*, Chap. LXXIX. § 61]; and then set out, with the King of Naples, in his carriage. Though well aware of the vacillation which Murat had evinced in command of the army in Poland,

and of the advances which he had made towards negotiation with the allied powers, the Emperor had the magnanimity, or the policy, to forgive it all: and he was again invested with the command of the cavalry, in which service he was, in truth, unrivalled. Uncertain on which side the principal attacks of the Allies were likely to be directed, and having himself no fixed plan of operations, Napoleon established his Guard and reserve cavalry at Görlitz and Zittau, watching the operations of his adversaries, and prepared to strike whenever they made a false movement, or afforded him an opportunity of falling upon them with advantage. Fifty thousand men, in three columns, crossed the mountain frontier of Bohemia, and established themselves in the Austrian territories at Gabel, Rumburg, and Reichenberg; while the feeble Austrian detachments, which were stationed at that point under Count Neipperg, fell back, still skilfully screening their rear, on the road to Prague.

9. Napoleon's movements at this time were based upon the idea, to which he obstinately adhered till it had well-nigh proved his ruin, that the great effort of the Allies would be made on the side of Silesia, and that it was there that the first decisive strokes of the campaign were to be delivered. He persevered in this belief, even after he had become acquainted, by his irruption into Bohemia, with the march of the grand Russian and Prussian army into that province, and their concentration under the immediate eye of the allied sovereigns round the walls of Prague. All the efforts of Marshal St Cyr to convince him that this was the quarter from which danger was to be apprehended;* that so great an accumula-

* "The movement which your majesty has commenced into Bohemia upon Gabel, and which you appear to design to push still further on, appears to me one of those happy inspirations of which your genius is so fruitful. The re-union of the three sovereigns at Prague, of the Austrian army, and a considerable part of the Russian and Prussian, do not leave a doubt of the intentions of the enemy. They have always desired to operate on that side; they desire it still,

tion of force in Bohemia would not have been made without some serious design; and that the French would soon find their quarters straitened in the neighbourhood of Torgau and Dresden, were in vain. Deaf to these arguments, and uninfluenced even by the obvious confirmation which they received from the march of the Russians and Prussians in such force into Bohemia, Napoleon persisted in believing that it was on the Bober and the Katzbach, now comparatively stripped of troops, that he should commence operations; and assuring St Cyr, who was left at Pirna with thirty thousand men, in command of the passes leading from Bohemia to Dresden, that he had nothing to fear; that Vandamme would come to his assistance if the enemy threatened him in considerable force; and that, if necessary, he himself would return with his Guard, and assemble a hundred and sixty thousand men round the walls of that city;—he ordered the whole troops under his immediate command to wheel to the left, and defile towards Silesia.*

10. Meanwhile Blucher was vigorously pressing on the French army in Silesia, which, not being in sufficient strength to resist his formidable masses,

notwithstanding the movements of your majesty. So great an army is not assembled without a purpose: their object is to execute a change of front along their whole line, the left in front moving upon Wittenberg; and to straiten Dresden and Torgau so much by intrenching themselves around them, even if they should not succeed in taking these fortresses, as to render all egress almost impossible, while, with their right, they make head against your majesty on the Elbe."—ST CYR TO NAPOLEON, August 21, 1813. ST CYR, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 872; *Pièces Just.*

* "Should the Russian and Austrian forces united march upon Dresden by the left bank, General Vandamme will come to its relief; you will then have under your orders 60,000 men in the camp of Dresden on the two banks. The troops in the camp of Zittau, become disposable in that event, will also hasten there; they will arrive in four days, and raise your force to 100,000. I will come with my Guard, 50,000 strong; and in four days we shall have from 160,000 to 180,000 men round its walls. It is of no consequence though they cut me off from France: the essential point is, that I should not be cut off from Dresden and the Elbe. The army of Silesia, which is from 150,000

was everywhere falling back before him. Lauriston was pushed by the Russians under Langeron; Ney, by the corps of Sacken; Marmont and Macdonald, by the Prussians under Blucher and York. Such was the vigour of the pursuit, that ground was rapidly lost by the French in every direction. Ney fell back on the night of the 17th from Liegnitz to Haynau; next day the Katzbach was passed at all points; on the 18th, Blucher established his headquarters at Goldberg, while Sacken occupied Liegnitz. Still the Allies pressed on: Langeron on the left passed the Bober at Zobten, after routing a detachment which occupied that point; in the centre, Blucher, with his brave Prussians, obliged Lauriston also to recross it; while Ney, in like manner, was compelled to evacuate Buntzlan, and fall back across the same stream. Thus, at all points, the French force in Silesia was giving way before the enemy; and it was of sinister augury that the gallant generals at its head did not feel themselves strong enough to withstand his advance: for it was an army which Napoleon estimated at a hundred thousand men, which was thus receding without striking a blow.†

11. But the arrival of the heads of to 140,000 men, without the Guard, may be reinforced by that corps d'élite, and raised to 180,000. They will debouch against Wittgenstein, Blucher, and Sacken, who at this moment are marching against our troops at Buntzlan: as soon as I have destroyed or disabled them, I will be in a situation to restore the equilibrium by marching upon Berlin or taking the Austrians in rear in Bohemia. All that is not as yet clear: but one thing is sufficiently clear, that you cannot turn 400,000 men, posted under cover of a chain of fortified places, and who can debouch at pleasure by Dresden, Torgau, Wittenberg, or Magdeburg. All you have to do is, to dispute the ground, gain time, and preserve Dresden, and to maintain active and constant communications with General Vandamme."—NAPOLEON TO ST CYR, 17th August 1813. ST CYR, iv. 365; *Pièces Just.*

† "MY COUSIN,—Inform the Duke of Tarentum (Macdonald), that I have put under his orders the army of the Bober, which is composed of one hundred thousand men, infantry, cavalry, artillery, and engineers included."—NAPOLEON'S *Instructions to BERTHIER for MACDONALD*, 23d August 1813. ST CYR, iv. 374; *Pièces Just.*

the columns of Guards and cavalry, commanded by Napoleon in person, which were directed with all possible expedition to the left, through the Bohemian mountains towards Buntzlau, soon changed the state of affairs in this quarter. No sooner did they appear, than the retreat of Ney's army was stopped, and the soldiers with joy received orders to wheel about and march against the enemy. The indefatigable activity of the Emperor communicated itself to the troops: all vied with each other in pressing forward to what it was hoped would prove a decisive victory; and infantry, cavalry, and artillery, with the Imperial Guard at their head, poured in an impetuous, yet regulated torrent, down the valleys of the Bohemian mountains, and inundated the Silesian plains. Such was Napoleon's anxiety to press forward, that he outstripped even the cavalry of the Guard, and arrived at Lauban, in advance of Görlitz, with hardly any of his attendants around him. By daybreak on the following morning he was on the banks of the Bober, and entered Löwenberg with the advanced guards. The bridge, which the Prussians had broken down, was restored under the cover of artillery; Lauriston, in face of the enemy, recrossed the river, and advanced, with a constant running fire in front, to the gates of Goldberg. Blücher continuing his retreat on the following day, the Katzbach also was passed, and the whole army of Silesia concentrated around Jauer. But the retreat of the Allies, though decidedly pronounced, was far from being a flight. With admirable skill they took advantage of every favourable position to check the pursuit, and give time to the columns in rear to retire in order; and in several severe actions, especially one in front of Goldberg, inflicted a very severe loss upon the enemy. Such was the magnitude of the forces employed on both sides, and the extent of ground over which hostilities were carried on, that although they had only lasted five days, and no general engagement had taken place, each party was already weakened by fully six

thousand men. Napoleon evinced the greatest satisfaction at the result of this day's operations, and at thus seeing so great a mass of the enemy's forces retreating before him in the very outset of the campaign. But cooler observers in the French army remarked, that the plan of the Allies was sagaciously designed and skillfully executed, when they had thus early succeeded in attracting Napoleon to whichever side they chose, and yet avoided the risk of an encounter when the chances were no longer in their favour.

12. In truth, Blücher's advance and subsequent retreat were part of the general policy of the Allies for the conduct of the campaign laid down at Trachenberg, and developed with remarkable precision in his instructions,*

* "Should the enemy evince an intention to make an irruption into Bohemia, or to attack the army of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, the army of Silesia will endeavour to impede his operations as much as possible, always taking care not to engage superior forces. In order to arrive at that object, it will be necessary to harass the enemy with the advanced guard and light troops, and observe him narrowly, in order to prevent him from stealing a march, unperceived, into Saxony; but still every engagement with the enemy in superior force must be avoided. Should the enemy, on the other hand, direct his principal forces against the army of Silesia, it will endeavour to arrest him as long as possible; and, having done so, direct its retreat upon the Neisse, taking especial care not to compromise its safety. In that event, the corps of General Sacken will extend itself along the Oder, and take measures, by means of a corps of light cavalry, to keep up the communication with the army of reserve in Poland. The light corps at Landshtut will also, in that event, keep up the communication with the army of Bohemia; the fortresses of Silesia must be adequately garrisoned, chiefly from the landwehr, and the main army will retire upon Neisse. That place, with its intrenched camp, which must be put in a proper posture of defence, will serve as a *point-d'appui* to it; while the army of Bohemia, and that of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, will take the enemy in rear. Should the enemy, on the other hand, direct his principal attack against the army of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, or on Berlin, the army of Silesia will resume the offensive; and the bulk of the allied forces will be directed against his rear, the army of Silesia on the right bank of the Elbe, that of Bohemia on the left bank."—*Instructions to FIELD-MARSHAL BLÜCHER*. ST CYN, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 349.

and Napoleon, in consequence of it, and from the bold measures adopted in his rear, was brought to within a hair's-breadth of destruction. Following out the decided but yet judicious counsels of Bernadotte, Moreau, and Jomini, the allied sovereigns had taken the resolution of descending, with their whole disposable force, from Bohemia upon Saxony and Dresden, and thus striking at the enemy's communications, and the heart of his power, at the very time when the Emperor himself, with the flower of his army, was far advanced in Silesia in pursuit of the retiring columns of Blücher. At the time when Napoleon was driving the last corps of the army of Silesia across the Bober, the grand army of the Allies, two hundred thousand strong, broke up from their cantonments in Bohemia, and began to cross the Erzgebirge mountains. All the passes into Saxony were soon crowded with the innumerable host, which threatened soon to cut off the whole communications of the Emperor with France, and render untenable the position which he had studied and fortified with so much care on the Elbe. It had been at first resolved to move in force upon Leipsic, in order to cut off Napoleon's communications with France; but this was abandoned as endangering too much their own line of retreat and supplies.

13. To oppose this formidable invasion there was no force immediately available but that of St Cyr, stationed at Pirna, which numbered only twenty-two thousand men present with the eagles on the frontier, though its nominal amount was thirty thousand. Vandamme's corps, of greater strength, and Poniatowski's Poles were within a few days' march, at the entrance of the passes towards Zittau and Gabel, leading into Silesia; but they could not be relied on to co-operate in warding off any sudden attack on the capital. Meanwhile, the danger was instant and pressing. The allied army rapidly advanced; and, on the 21st, Barclay de Tolly and Wittgenstein presented themselves in great strength before the barriers, on the heights of

Peterswalde, which they speedily forced, and laid open the great road from Prague to Dresden. The Prussians, under Kleist, farther to the left, descended from the mountains upon Gottleube and Dohna; while the great masses of the Austrians, with the Imperial headquarters, moved by the roads of Altenberg and Saida on Dippoldiswalde; and on the extreme left, Colloredo, Chastellar, Giulay, and Kleinau poured down from the Marienberg hills, and, directing their advance upon Freyberg, threatened entirely to intercept the communication between Dresden and the Rhine.

14. St Cyr had from the beginning conjectured, from the perfect stillness of the allied army along the whole Bohemian frontier, contrasted with the incessant rattle of tirailleurs which Blücher kept up in front of his line, that the real attack was intended to be made outside of Dresden. But having been unable to get the Emperor to share in his opinion, he was left alone to make head against the torrent. Too experienced, however, to attempt to withstand so vast a force with the comparatively few troops at his disposal, he contented himself with impeding their advance as much as possible; and, after some sharp encounters with Wittgenstein's advanced guard, withdrew within the redoubts of Dresden, while Wittgenstein occupied the town of Pirna, and the allied headquarters were advanced to Dippoldiswalde. Schwartzberg's original intention was not to have moved on Dresden, but to have directed the main body of his force on Freyberg, with a view to a combined operation with Bernadotte in the neighbourhood of Leipsic; and it was only after arriving at Marienberg on the 23d, that this plan was abandoned. Without doubt, the movement upon Dresden promised infinitely greater and more immediate results than an advance into the plains of Saxony; but it was owing to the time lost in this march and countermarch, that the failure of the operation was owing. For if their whole force had from the first marched direct upon Dresden,

they would have arrived before its walls on the evening of the 23d, and it might have been carried by assault on the day following, thirty hours before the nearest of Napoleon's troops could have come up to its relief.

15. As it was, the Allies had now accomplished the greatest feat in strategy: they had thrown themselves in almost irresistible strength upon the enemy's communications, without compromising their own. Nothing was wanting but vigour in following up the measure, adequate to the ability with which it had been conceived; and Dresden would have been taken, a corps of the French army destroyed, and the defensive position on the Elbe, the base of Napoleon's whole positions in Germany, broken through and rendered useless. But to attain these great objects, the utmost vigour and celerity in attack were indispensable; for Napoleon was at no great distance on the right bank of the Elbe, and it might with certainty be anticipated, that as soon as he was made aware of the danger with which the centre of his power was threatened, he would make the utmost possible exertions to come up to its relief. The Allies arrived, however, in time to gain their object, if they had followed up their movement with sufficient activity. Notwithstanding the unnecessary detour towards Freyberg, part of their army reached the neighbourhood of Dresden on the evening of the 23d,* and next morning the trembling inhabitants of that beautiful city beheld the smiling hills around their walls resplendent with bayonets, and studded with a portentous array of artillery. During the whole of the 24th, the troops, who were extremely fatigued, continued to arrive; and on the morning of the 25th, a hundred and twenty thousand men, with above five hundred pieces

* "Dresden, 23d August 1813, *Ten at night*.—At five this afternoon the enemy approached Dresden, after having driven in our cavalry. We expected an attack this evening, but probably it will take place to-morrow. Your majesty knows better than I do, what time it requires for heavy artillery to beat down enclosure walls and palisades."—*ST CYR to NAPOLEON*, 23d August 1813. *ST CYR*, iv. 380.

of cannon, were assembled round the city.† Moreau and Jomini warmly counselled an immediate attack; and Lord Cathcart, who with his usual gallantry had rode forward over the green turf behind the Grosse Garten, between Plauen and Ræcknitz, to the close vicinity of the enemy's posts, reported that the coast was clear, and strongly supported the same advice. Alexander was clear for adopting it; but Schwartzberg and the Austrians, accustomed only to the methodical habits of former wars, and insensible to the inestimable importance of time in combating Napoleon, insisted upon deferring the attack, till Klenau's corps, which, being on the extreme left, had not yet arrived from Freyberg, should be in line. This opinion prevailed, as the most lukewarm and timid invariably does with all *small* assemblies of men on whom a serious responsibility is thrown;‡ the attack was deferred till the following afternoon, and meanwhile Napoleon arrived with his cuirassiers and Guards, bearing the issue of the strife upon their sabre points.§

16. On approaching Dresden, Schwartzberg issued the following order of the day to his troops:—"The great day is arrived, brave warriors! Our country reckons on you: heretofore

† "An immense army, composed of Russians, Prussians, and Austrians, is at this moment all around Dresden, with a prodigious train of artillery. From the vast amount of force which he has thus collected, it would appear that the enemy is determined to hazard an attack, knowing that your majesty is not far off, though perhaps not suspecting that you are so near as you actually are. We are determined to do all in our power; but I can answer for nothing more with such young soldiers."—*ST CYR to NAPOLEON*, 25th August 1813, *Midnight*; *ST CYR*, iv. 384, 385.

‡ Observe, *small* assemblies of men, such as juries, or councils of war. Rash counsels are often adopted in large assemblies, for the plain reason, that individual responsibility is lost amid numbers. Individuals trusted with supreme powers are so frequently bold, because the dread of responsibility is merged in a sense of duty or a desire of distinction which no one else can share.

§ The preceding account of what passed before Dresden on the 25th, is entirely confirmed by the minute details on the subject I have often received from my highly esteemed and venerable friend, the late Lord Cathcart himself.

she has never been disappointed. All our efforts to obtain peace on equitable terms, such terms as alone can be durable—have failed. Nothing could bring back the French government to moderation and reason. We enter not alone into the strife: all that Europe can oppose to the powerful enemy of peace and liberty, is on our side. Austria, Russia, Prussia, Sweden, England, Spain, all combine their efforts to attain the same object—a solid and durable peace; a reasonable distribution of force between the different powers, and the independence of each individual state. It is not against France, but the overwhelming domination of France beyond its own limits, that this great alliance has been formed. Spain and Russia have proved what the constancy and resolution of a people can do. The year 1813 will demonstrate what can be effected by the united force of so many powerful states. In a war so sacred, we require more than ever to practise those virtues by which our armies in time past have been so distinguished. Devotion without bounds to our monarch and our country: magnanimity alike in success or reverse: determination and constancy on the field of battle: moderation and humanity towards the weak—such are the virtues of which you should ever give the example. The Emperor will remain with you; for he has trusted to your arms all that he holds most dear—the honour of the nation, the protection of our country, the security and welfare of posterity. Be grateful, warriors, that you march before God, who will never abandon the cause of justice; and under the eyes of a monarch whose paternal sentiments and affection are well known to you. Europe awaits her deliverance at your hands, after so long a train of misfortunes.”

17. Napoleon, having received intelligence of the movements of the Allies across the Bohemian frontier, had halted at Lowenberg on the 23d; and after giving the command of the army destined to combat Blücher to Marshal Macdonald, retraced his steps the same day, accompanied by the reserve cav-

alry and Guards, to Görlitz. The same evening Murat was sent on to Dresden to inform the King of Saxony and St Cyr of the speedy arrival of the Emperor with the flower of his army; and such was the confidence which prevailed at headquarters, that Berthier said in a careless way—“Well, we shall gain a great battle: we shall march on Prague, on Berlin, on Vienna!” The soldiers, however, who marched on their feet, and did not ride like Berthier in an easy carriage, though animated with the same spirit, were by no means equally confident. They were ready to sink under their excessive fatigue, having marched since the renewal of hostilities nearly ten leagues a-day; and such was their worn-out condition, that the Emperor ordered twenty thousand bottles of wine to be purchased at Görlitz, and distributed among the Guards alone. So complete, however, was the exhaustion of the country, from having so long been the seat of war, that hardly a tenth part of that quantity could be procured, and the greater part of the wearied men pursued their march without any other than the scanty supplies which they could themselves extract by terror from the inhabitants. Napoleon continued his advance in the middle of his Guards all the 24th, and halted at Bautzen. He there resolved to continue his march direct upon Dresden, or move to the left upon Pirna, and threaten the communications and rear of the Allies, according to the information he might receive as to whether or not that capital, unaided, could hold out till the 28th.

18. Early on the following morning, the Emperor resumed his march, still keeping the road which led alike to Dresden and Pirna, with the design of throwing himself, if possible, on the rear of the Allies. Having, however, the day before despatched General Gourgaud to Dresden,* to obtain in-

* “To-morrow,” said Napoleon to General Gourgaud, “I shall be on the road to Pirna; but I shall stop at Stolpen. Set you out immediately for Dresden; ride as hard as you can, and be there this evening; see St Cyr, the King of Naples, and the King of Saxony; reassure every one. Tell them to-morrow I

formation as to the state of the city, he halted, according to agreement, at Stolpen, where the road to Dresden branches off from that to Bohemia, and there received the most alarming intelligence as to the state of affairs in the Saxon capital. The letters both of Murat and St Cyr left no room for doubt that the city was in the most imminent danger; that the accidental delay in the attack had alone hitherto preserved it; and that its fall might hourly be looked for. At eleven at night Gourgaud returned, and confirmed the intelligence; adding, that it was surrounded by so vast an army that not a chance remained of holding out another day but from the immediate return of the Emperor. Already the lines of investiture extended from Pirna to Plauen; and nothing but the arrival of Klenau, the approach of whose columns was already announced, was wanting, to enable the enemy to complete the circle from the Upper to the Lower Elbe. Preparations were already made for evacuating the Grosse Garten: the glare of a village in flames immediately behind it threw an ominous light on the domes of Dresden; and when Gourgaud left the city shortly after dark, the whole heavens to the south and west were resplendent with the fires of the enemy's bivouacs.

19. Napoleon now saw that affairs were urgent: there was not a moment to be lost if Dresden was to be saved, and the communications of the army preserved. He instantly sent for General Haxo, the celebrated engineer, and thus addressed him:—"Vandamme is beyond the Elbe, near Pirna: he will find himself on the rear of the enemy, whose anxiety to get possession of Dresden is evidently extreme. My design was to have followed up that movement with my whole army: it would, perhaps, have been the most

effectual way to have brought matters to an issue with the enemy; but the fate of Dresden disquiets me. I cannot bring myself to sacrifice that town. Some hours must elapse before I can reach it; but I have decided, not without regret, to change my plan, and to march to its relief. Vandamme is in sufficient strength to play an important part in that general movement, and inflict an essential injury on the enemy. *Let him advance from Pirna to Gieshübel*, and gain the heights of Peterswalde; let him maintain himself there, occupy all the defiles, and from that impregnable post await the issue of events around Dresden. To him is destined the lot of receiving the sword of the vanquished; but he will require *sang-froid*: above all, do not let him be imposed upon by a rabble of fugitives. Explain fully my intentions to Vandamme; tell him what I expect from him. Never will he have a finer opportunity of earning his marshal's baton." Haxo immediately set out, descended from the heights of Stolpen into the gorges of Lillenstein, joined Vandamme, and never again quitted his side.

20. By daybreak on the following morning, the whole troops around the Emperor's headquarters were in motion, and defiling on the road to Dresden. Despite their excessive fatigue, having marched forty leagues in four days, they pressed ardently forward; for now the cannon were distinctly heard from the left bank of the Elbe, and the breathless couriers who succeeded each other from the Saxon capital announced, that, if they did not speedily arrive, the city was lost. The Guards were at the head of the array; next came Latour-Maubourg's cuirassiers, then Victor's infantry and Kellerman's cavalry; while Marmont's corps moved in a parallel line on the direct road from Bautzen, which they had never left. At eight o'clock the advanced guard reached the elevated plateau where the roads of Bautzen, of Stolpen, and of Pilsnitz, intersect each other, shortly before the entry of the new town of Dresden, and from which the eye can survey the whole plain on

can be in Dresden with forty thousand men, and the day following arrive there with my whole army. At daybreak visit the redoubts and outposts; consult the commander of engineers as to whether they can hold out. Return to me as quickly as possible to-morrow at Stolpen, and report well the opinion of Murat and St Cyr as to the real state of things."—24th August 1813. *FAIN*, ii. 256.

the other side of the Elbe. With what anxiety did they behold it entirely filled by an innumerable host of enemies; and the hostile columns so near the advanced works that an assault might every instant be expected! Already the Prussian uniforms were to be seen in full possession of the Grosse Garten; columns of attack were forming within cannon-shot of the suburb of Pirna; while, on the banks of the Elbe, Wittgenstein had constructed batteries to enfilade the road by which the troops were to enter the capital. Dresden was surrounded on all sides; the suburb of Friedrichstadt alone was not enveloped. The French were visible in force in the redoubts and behind the works; but their numbers appeared a handful in the midst of the interminable lines of the beleaguering host; and a silence more terrible than the roar of artillery, bespoke the awful moments of suspense which preceded the commencement of the fight.

21. No sooner, however, did the French advanced guard appear than the contest commenced. So violent was the fire kept up by Wittgenstein's guns on the road by which the Emperor was to pass, that he was obliged to leave his carriage, and creep along the ground on his hands and knees over the exposed part; while the bullets from the Russian batteries on the one side, and the bombs from the redoubt Marcellini on the other, flew over his head. Having in this way got over the dangerous ground, he suddenly made his appearance at ten o'clock at the Marcellini palace, to the no small astonishment of its royal inmates, who were deliberating on the necessity of coming to terms with the enemy. After a short stay with the King, whom he reassured by the promise of the speedy arrival of his Guards, Napoleon went out to visit the exterior works from the barrier of Pirna to that of Freyberg, accompanied only by a single page to avoid attracting attention; and so close were the enemy's posts now in that quarter, that the youth was wounded by a spent musket-ball, while standing at the Emperor's side.

22. Having completed this important reconnoissance, on which his operations for the day in a great measure depended, Napoleon returned to the palace, and sent out couriers in all directions to convey his orders to the corps which successively arrived for the defence of the capital. Meanwhile the Guards and cuirassiers, in great strength, followed the Emperor like a torrent across the bridges into the city; and it was soon apparent, from their numbers and gallant bearing, that all immediate danger was at an end. In vain the inhabitants offered them refreshments; these brave men, impressed to the lowest drummer with the urgency of the moment, continued to press on, though burning with thirst, and ready to drop down under the ardent rays of the sun. From ten in the morning till late at night, ceaseless columns of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, pressed without a moment's intermission over both the bridges; and while the enemy's columns darkened the brows of the heights of Raecknitz, the gallant cuirassiers, in defiling over the bridges, keeping their eyes fixed on the spot, held their heads the higher, and passed on undaunted.

23. At length, at four o'clock in the afternoon, Schwartzenberg's patience, which had long held out for the arrival of Klenau's corps, which had not yet come up, became exhausted, and he gave the signal for the attack. Instantly the batteries on all the heights round the city were brought forward, and above a hundred guns in the front line commenced a terrible fire on its works and buildings. The bombs and cannon-balls fell on all sides, and over its whole extent. Several houses speedily took fire; the inhabitants, in despair, sought refuge in the cellars and vaults to avoid the effects of the bombardment; while the frequent bursting of shells in the streets, the loud thunder of the artillery from the ramparts and redoubts, the heavy rolling of the guns and ammunition wagons along the pavement, the cries of the drivers, and measured tread of the marching men who forced their way through the throng, combined to pro-

duce a scene of unexampled sublimity and terror. Every street and square in Dresden was by this time crowded with troops; above sixty thousand men had defiled over the bridges since ten o'clock, and the balls fell and bombs exploded with dreadful effect among their dense masses.

24. The attack of the Allies was indeed terrible. At the signal of three guns, fired from the headquarters on the heights of Raacknitz, six dark columns, deep and massy, descended from the heights, each preceded by fifty pieces of artillery, and advanced, with a steady step and in the finest order, against the city. It was an awful, but yet an animating sight, when these immense masses, without firing a shot or breaking the regularity of their array, descended in silent majesty towards the walls. No force on earth seemed capable of resisting them; so vast, yet orderly, was the array, that their tread, when hardly within cannon-shot, could be distinctly heard from the ramparts. Wittgenstein commanded the three columns on the right, who advanced from the Grosse Garten; Kleist's Prussians in the centre moved partly through the Grosse Garten, partly over the open ground to their left, under Prince Augustus of Prussia, and with them were combined three divisions of Austrians under Count Colloredo; the remainder of the Austrians on the left, under Prince Maurice of Lichtenstein, formed the completion of the vast array. Soon the beautiful buildings of Dresden were enveloped in smoke and flame; an incessant fire issued from the works; while the allied batteries on the semicircle of heights around sent a storm of projectiles through the air, and the moving batteries in front of their columns steadily advanced towards the embrasures of the redoubts.

25. At some points the attack was irresistible. The great redoubt, situated in front of the Moczinski Garten, was stormed in the most gallant style, after its palisades had been beaten down, by the Austrians under Colloredo. Sir Robert Wilson, ever foremost where danger was to be encoun-

tered or glory won, was the first man who entered it. At the same time, an impetuous attack by the Russians under Wittgenstein, carried the redoubts on the left, near the Hopfgarten; while Kleist, with his ardent Prussians, drove the enemy entirely out of the Grosse Garten, and approached on that side close to the barriers of the suburb. The French, by bringing up fresh troops, regained the Moczinski redoubt; but the fire of the Austrian batteries, which now enfiladed it on both sides, was so terrible, that the men who entered were almost all destroyed, and the work again fell into the enemy's hands. By six o'clock in the evening, the last reserves of St Cyr's corps had been all engaged; the suburbs were furiously attacked, as well on the side of Pirna as that of Plauen. Napoleon, seriously disquieted, had stationed all the disposable battalions of the Old Guard at the threatened barriers, and was despatching courier after courier to hasten the march of the Young Guard. Meanwhile the Austrian guns were furiously battering the rampart, at the distance only of a hundred paces; a tempest of bombs and cannon-balls was falling on all sides; the trembling inhabitants were wounded as soon as they appeared at their doors; frequent explosions of shells and ammunition waggons in the streets diffused universal consternation: already the hatchets of the pioneers were heard at the gate of Plauen and barrier of Dippoldiswalde, and the triumphant cry was heard among the assailants, "To Paris! to Paris!"

26. Napoleon, who had evinced great anxiety while this tremendous attack was going forward, was at length relieved at half-past six by the arrival of the Young Guard, and now deemed himself in sufficient strength to hazard a sally at each extremity of his position. The gate of Plauen was thrown open, and the dense masses of the Guard under Ney rushed furiously out; while a quick discharge of musketry from the loopholed walls and windows of the adjacent houses, favoured their sortie. The Austrian columns, little anticipating so formidable

an outset, fell back in disorder: and the French Guards, taking advantage of the moment when the gate was free, defiled rapidly out, and, forming in line on either side of it, by their increasing mass and enthusiastic valour gained ground on the enemy. Similar sorties took place at the gates of Pirna and at the barrier of Dippoldiswalde. At all points the assailants, wholly unprepared for such an attack, and deeming the day already won, lost ground; the Young Guard, with loud cheers, regained the blood-stained redoubt of Mocinski; the left, under Mortier, drove the Russians from the suburb of Pirna, and dislodged the Prussians from the Grosse Garten: while Murat, issuing with his formidable squadrons from the gate of Plauen, established himself for the night in the rear of the right wing under Ney, which had emerged altogether from the suburbs on the road to Freyberg into the open country. Astonished at this unexpected resistance, which they had by no means anticipated, and perceiving, from the strength of the columns which had issued from the city, as well as the vigour of the attacks, that Napoleon in person directed the defence, the allied generals drew off their troops for the night; but, not yet despairing of final success, they resolved to await a pitched battle on the adjacent heights, on the following morning.

27. The weather, which for some days previous had been serene and intensely hot, now suddenly changed; vast clouds filled the skies, and soon the surcharged moisture poured itself out in a torrent of rain. Regardless of the storm, Napoleon traversed the city after it was dark, and waited on the bridge till Marmont and Victor's corps began to defile over. As soon as he was assured of their arrival, he returned hastily through the streets, again issued forth on the other side, and, by the light of the bivouacs, visited the whole line occupied by his troops, now entirely outside the city, from the barrier of Pirna to the suburb of Friedrichstadt. The force he had accumulated was such as to put him in a condition, not only to repel any

further attack which might be directed against the city, but to resume the offensive at all points. In addition to the corps of St Cyr, Marmont, and Victor, he had at his command the whole Guards, and all the heavy horse of Milhaud and Latour-Maubourg, under Murat; at least a hundred and twenty thousand men, of whom twenty thousand were admirable cavalry. His position at Dresden also gave him very great advantages; for by securing his centre by means of a fortress, of which the strength had been tried on the preceding day, it enabled him to throw the weight of his forces on the two flanks. On the other hand the Allies, having no such protection for the middle of their line, were under the necessity of strengthening it equally in all quarters, and thus in all probability would be inferior to the enemy at the real points of attack. Considerable reinforcements, however, came up during the night from the side of Freyberg; and although Klenau had not yet made his appearance, yet his arrival was positively announced for the following day. Notwithstanding the loss of six thousand men in the assault of Dresden, they had now nearly a hundred and sixty thousand men in line, independent of Klenau, who it was hoped would come up before the action was over. They resolved, therefore, to await the attack of the enemy on the following day; and, withdrawing altogether from cannon-shot of the ramparts, arranged their formidable masses in the form of a semicircle on the heights around the walls, from the Elbe above the suburb of Pirna, to the foot of the slopes of Wolfnitz, below the city.

28. Napoleon disposed his troops during the night as follows:—The right wing, composed of the corps of Victor, and the cavalry of Latour-Maubourg, was stationed in front of the gate of Wildsdrack, and in the fields and low grounds from that down the Elbe towards Priesnitz; the centre, under the Emperor in person, comprised the corps of Marmont and St Cyr, having the infantry and cavalry of the Old Guard in reserve, supported

by the three great redoubts; on the left, Ney had the command, and directed the four divisions of the Young Guard and the cavalry of Kellerman, which extended to the Elbe, beyond the suburb of Pirna. Above a hundred and thirty thousand men* were by daylight on the following morning assembled in this position, having Dresden, bristling with cannon, as a vast fortress to support their centre. But their position was extraordinary, and, if they were defeated, altogether desperate; for they fought with their backs to the Elbe, and their faces to the Rhine: the allied army, in great strength, had intercepted their whole communications with France, and if worsted, they would be thrown back into a town with only two bridges traversing an otherwise impassable river in their rear.

29. On the other side, the Allies arranged their troops in the following manner:—On the right, Wittgenstein commanded the Russians on the road to Pirna, and Kleist the Prussians between Striesen and Strehlen: in the centre, Schwartzenberg, with the corps of Colloredo, Chastellar, and Bianchi's grenadiers in reserve, occupied the semicircle of heights which extend from Strehlen by Raacknitz to Plauen; while beyond Plauen, on the left, were posted the corps of Giulay and one division of Klenau's troops, which had at length come up. But from the extreme allied left, at the foot of the heights of Wolfnitz to Priesnitz, was a vacant space wholly unoccupied, destined for the remainder of Klenau's men when they should arrive; and the whole of that wing was not only intrusted to inexperienced troops, but was destitute of any solid support,

either from inequality of ground or from villages. This oversight on the part of the general-in-chief was the more reprehensible, as they stood opposite to the terrible cuirassiers of Latour-Maubourg, fourteen thousand strong, with nothing but an intervening level space for the horse to charge over; while, if they had been drawn back half a mile, to the passes and broken ground in their rear, or not pushed across the precipitous defile of Tharandt, which separated them from the main army, they would have been beyond the reach of danger.

30. Both armies passed a cheerless night, drenched to the skin by the torrents of rain which never ceased to descend with uncommon violence. Napoleon, however, who had supped with the King of Saxony the night before in the highest spirits, was on horseback at six in the morning, and rode out to the neighbourhood of the great redoubt, which had been the scene of such a desperate contest on the preceding day. Ghastly traces of the combat were to be seen on all sides; out of the newly-made graves hands and arms were projecting, which stuck up stark and stiff from the earth in the most frightful manner. The Emperor took his station beside a great fire which had been lighted by his troops in the middle of the squares of the Old Guard, and immediately behind were the cavalry of the cuirassiers dismounted beside their horses. The cannonade soon began along the whole line; but it was kept up for some hours only in a desultory manner, the excessive rain and thick mist rendering it impossible either to move the infantry, or point the guns with precision. Jomini strongly urged the allied sovereigns during the interval to change the front of their line; and, accumulating their force on the enemy's left, which was next the Elbe, to cut off Vandamme and Poniatowski, who were at Pirna and Zittau, from the remainder of the army. This manoeuvre, which would have re-established affairs, was altogether foreign to Schwartzenberg's ideas, which were entirely based upon cutting off the French

* St Cyr's corps, three divisions,	20,000
Marmont's do. three divisions,	22,000
Victor's do. four divisions,	28,000
Latour-Maubourg's cavalry, four divisions,	14,000
Kellerman's cavalry, three divisions,	9,000
Infantry of the Old Guard,	6,000
Do. of the Young Guard, four divisions,	28,000
Cavalry of the Guard, four divisions,	4,000

131,000

—LONDONDERRY, 114; VAUDONCOURT, 1. 129.

communications by their right with Torgau and Leipsic. Meanwhile the French right gradually gained ground upon the detached corps of Austrians beyond the ravine on the allied left, which was equally incapable of maintaining itself by its intrinsic strength, or obtaining succour across the chasm from the centre; and Klenau, though strenuously urged to accelerate his movements, had not yet come up.

31. Napoleon was not long of turning to the best account this state of matters in the allied line. Occupying himself a strong central position, and in a situation to strike at any portion of the vast semicircular line which lay before him, he had also this immense advantage, that the thick mist and incessant rain rendered it impossible, not only for the allied generals to see against what quarter preparations were directed, but even for the commanders of corps to perceive the enemy until they were close upon them. This last circumstance led to a most serious catastrophe on the left. Unperceived by the enemy, Murat had stolen round in the rear of Victor's men, entirely turning the flank of the Austrians, and got with Latour-Maubourg's formidable cuirassiers into the low meadows which lie between Wolfnitz and the Elbe, in the direction of Priesnitz, where it was intended that Klenau's corps should have completed the allied line to the river. Shrouded by the mist, he had thus placed himself with his whole force close to the extreme Austrian left, and almost perpendicular to their line, before they were aware of his approach. Murat, in order to divert the enemy's attention from this decisive attack, caused Victor's infantry to occupy Löbda in their front, from whence they advanced in column against the line, and kept up a heavy cannonade from a strong battery posted on an eminence on their left. When the action had become warm between the foot, he suddenly burst, with twelve thousand chosen horsemen, out of the mist, on their flank and rear. So heavy had been the rain that scarce any of the Austrian muskets would go off. The effect of this onset, as of

the Polish lancers, under similar circumstances, on the English infantry at Albuera, was decisive. The Austrians, before they had time to throw themselves into square, were broken by the formidable heavy-armed French lancers—a force novel in modern war, but which, like the charge of the steel-clad knights of old, proved irresistible.* In a few minutes the line was broken through, pierced in all directions, and cut to pieces. A few battalions next the centre made their way across the ravine, and escaped; the whole remainder, being three-fourths of the entire corps, with General Metsko, were killed or made prisoners.

32. No sooner was Napoleon made aware, by the advancing cannonade on his right, that Murat's attack had proved successful, than he gave orders for his left to advance against Wittgenstein, while the action in the centre was still confined to a distant cannonade. Ney had concentrated the four divisions of the Young Guard between the Grosse Garten and the Elbe, and with them and Kellerman's dragoons he immediately made a vigorous attack upon the enemy. He was received by the Russians with their wonted steadiness. The villages of Seidnitz and Gross Dobritz were gallantly defended, against an overwhelming superiority of force, by General de Roth; and when he could no longer make them good, he retreated, in good order, to the main body of Wittgenstein's men, placed in the rear behind Reick. Jomini, seeing Ney far advanced along the Elbe, and showing

* Marshal Marmont, who commanded the attack, ascribes the successful issue of this cavalry charge, one of the most important made during the whole war, to its being made by cuirassiers armed with lances; the cuirass giving confidence to the mind, while the lance tripled the power of the arm. "The infantry were only overcome by fifty lancers of the escort of General Latour-Maubourg making a breach in their ranks, which allowed the cuirassiers to penetrate and destroy all. These lancers were able to approach with impunity, as the firing of the enemy was very weak on account of the rain; but the issue would not have been doubtful in any case, if the cuirassiers themselves had been armed with the invincible lance."—MARMONT, *Voyages*, l. 259.

his flank to the allied centre, counselled the Emperor Alexander to move forward Kleist, Milaradowich, Colloredo, and the masses of the centre which had not yet been engaged, and assail his columns in flank, by Strehlen—a movement which promised the most important results, and would probably have balanced the success of Murat on the left. Alexander at once appreciated the importance of this movement, and Kleist and Milaradowich were already in motion to execute it; but to support them, and fill up the chasm in the line occasioned by their descending the hills to the right, it was necessary that Barclay de Tolly, with the Russian reserve, should advance to the front. Barclay, however, did not move: the signal made for that purpose was at first not seen in consequence of the mist, and subsequently disregarded; and before the order could be renewed by an officer, a dreadful catastrophe had occurred, which in a great measure determined the Allies to retreat.

33. Moreau, who had with equal energy and ability discharged the important duties committed to him in the council of the Allies ever since the campaign reopened, was in earnest conversation with the Emperor Alexander about this very advance of Barclay's, when a cannon-shot from the French batteries in the centre almost carried off both his legs, the ball passing through the body of his horse. This melancholy event excited a very deep sensation at the allied headquarters, and for a time diverted Alexander's attention at the most critical moment of the action. The interest which it awakened was enhanced by the extraordinary heroism which the wounded general evinced under an excess of pain which might well have shaken any man's fortitude. He never uttered a groan while carried to the rear, with his mangled limbs hanging by the skin; and when laid on the table of the cottage into which he was carried to suffer amputation, he called for a cigar, which he smoked with the utmost tranquillity. He bore the painful operation with the same firmness which

had distinguished his whole demeanour since his wound: and when the surgeon who had cut off the right leg examined the other, and pronounced, with a faltering voice, that it was impossible to save it—"Cut it off then, also," said he calmly, which was immediately done. When the retreat commenced, he was transported in a litter to Laun, where he wrote a letter to his wife singularly characteristic of his mind.* Alexander was indefatigable in his attentions to the illustrious patient, and sanguine hopes were at one period entertained of his recovery: but at the end of five days fever supervened, and he expired with the same stoicism as he had lived, but without giving the slightest trace of religious impression. His body was embalmed and conveyed to Prague, whence it was transported to St Petersburg, and buried in the Catholic Church of that capital with the same honours as had been paid to the remains of Kutusoff. Alexander wrote a touching letter to his widow,† and presented her with a

* "MY DEAREST—At the battle of Dresden, three days ago, I had both my legs carried off by a cannon-ball. That rascal Buonaparte is always fortunate. They have performed the amputation as well as possible. Though the army has made a retrograde movement, it is by no means a reverse, but of design to draw nearer to General Blucher. Excuse my scrawl: I love and embrace you with my whole heart."—CAPE FIGUE, x. 201.

† "When the frightful catastrophe which befell General Moreau, at my side, deprived me of the guidance and experience of that great man, I indulged the hope that by means of care he might yet be preserved for his family and my friendship. Providence has disposed it otherwise; he has died as he lived, in the full possession of a great and constant mind. There is but one alleviation to the evils of life: the assurance that they are sympathised with by others. In Russia, Madame, you will everywhere find these sentiments; and if it should suit your arrangements to fix yourself there, I will strive to do everything in my power to embellish the existence of a person of whom I consider it a sacred duty to be the support and consolation. I pray you, Madame, to count on this irrevocably, and not to permit me to remain in ignorance of any circumstance in which I can be of any service to you, and always to write to me directly. The friendship which I had vowed to your husband extends beyond the tomb; and I have no other means of discharging what is

gift of five hundred thousand roubles, (20,000), and a pension of thirty thousand, (£1200); but the remains of Moreau remained far from his native land, and amidst the enemies of the people whom he had conducted with so much glory.*

34. The manner in which this great general met his death-wound was very remarkable. The cannon of the Guard, which were posted in front of the position which Napoleon occupied, had been observed for some time to exhibit an unusual degree of languor in replying to the discharges of the enemy; and the Emperor sent Gourgaud forward to inquire into the cause of so unusual a circumstance. The answer returned was, that it was to no purpose to waste their fire, as they could not reply with effect to the enemy's batteries, placed on the heights above, from so low a situation. "No matter," said the Emperor, "we must draw the attention of the enemy to that side; renew firing." Immediately they began their discharge, and directed their shot to a group of horsemen which at that moment appeared on the brow of the hill on the heights above. An extraordinary movement in the circle soon showed that some person of distinction had fallen; and Napoleon, who was strongly inclined to superstition, at first supposed it was Schwartzberg, and referred to the sinister augury which the conflagration in his palace on the night of the fête on Marie Louise's marriage had afforded [*ante*, Chap. LXIII. § 20]. It was then, however, that Moreau was struck; and so anxious had the Emperor been to conceal the intelligence of that great commander's arrival from his troops, though well aware of it himself, that it was not till next day that it became known;

but in part the debt which I owe him, but by attending to the comfort of his family. Receive, Madame, in these sad and mournful circumstances, the assurances of my unalterable friendship.—ALEXANDER."—CAPEFIGUE, x. 205, note.

* The spot where Moreau was struck, is marked by a simple monument shaded with trees; and constitutes one of the many interesting objects with which the charming environs of Dresden abound.

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when the advanced guards, in pursuing the Allies towards Bohemia, coming upon a little spaniel which was piteously moaning, were attracted by the collar round its neck, on which were written the words—"I belong to General Moreau." Thus they became at once acquainted with his presence and his fate.

35. A council of war was now held at the allied headquarters as to the course which should be pursued; the Emperor Alexander, the King of Prussia, and the principal generals, assembled on horseback in a ploughed field, to deliberate on a step on which the destinies of Europe might depend. The King of Prussia was clear for continuing the action, and to this opinion the Emperor of Russia and his principal generals inclined: observing that the whole centre and reserves had not yet engaged; that the French would hardly venture to attack the middle of their position, when defended by so powerful an artillery; and that a decisive blow might yet be struck at the French left. But Schwartzberg was decidedly for a retreat. Independent of the disaster on his left, which he felt the more sensibly as it had fallen almost exclusively on the Austrian troops, he was not without anxiety for his right, on account of the progress of Vandamme in his rear in that direction, who had advanced to Königstein, and already made himself master of the defile of Pirna. He strongly represented that the reserve parks of the army had not been able to get up; that the prodigious consumption of the two preceding days had nearly exhausted their ammunition, several guns having only a few rounds left; that the magazines of the army had not been able to follow its advance; in fine, that it was indispensable to regain Bohemia to prevent the dissolution of the army. These reasons, urged with the authority of the commander-in-chief, and supported by such facts, proved decisive; and a retreat was agreed to against the strenuous advice of the King of Prussia, who foresaw what risk it would expose the allied cause, and in an especial manner

B

his own dominions. But it was evident that they were mere covers, put forward to conceal the sense of a defeat; no victorious army ever yet was stopped in its career by want of ammunition, and somehow or other the successful party hardly ever fails to find food.*

36. But although retreat was thus resolved on before dark on the 27th, it was by no means equally clear how it was to be effected. Vandamme was master of the road by Pirna; that by Freyberg had been cut off by the successes of the King of Naples. Thus the two great roads, those by which the army had traversed the mountains, were in the enemy's hands; and the intermediate range between them was crossed only by country or inferior roads, which, amidst the torrents of rain which were falling, and the innumerable chariots and guns which would have to roll over them, would soon be rendered almost impassable. There was every reason to fear that the allied columns, defiling with these numerous encumbrances in the narrow gorges, traversed by these broken-up roads, would fall into inextricable confusion, and at the very least lose a large part of their artillery and baggage. Schwartzberg, however, deemed the risk of a prolonged stay in presence of the enemy, after the disasters of his left, more than sufficient to counterbalance these dangers; and therefore, though Klenau came up on the night of the 27th, the retreat was persisted in the following day. The army was ordered to march in three columns; the first under Barclay de Tolly, with the Prussians of Kleist, on Peterswalde; the second under Colloredo, on Altenberg; and the third, led by Klenau, on Marienberg. Wittgenstein was intrusted with the command of the rear-guard; and Ostermann, who, with a division of Russian

guards and cuirassiers, had been left to oppose Vandamme on the side of Pirna, was ordered to fall back towards Peterswalde.

37. Early on the morning of the 28th, Napoleon, according to his usual custom, visited the field of battle. It may be conceived what a ghastly spectacle was presented by the ground, on which, within the space of a league round the walls, three hundred thousand men had combated for two days with determined resolution, under the fire of above a thousand pieces of cannon. The wounded had, for the most part, been transported during the night into the town by the efforts of the French surgeons and the unwearied zeal of the inhabitants, who, on this occasion, as after the battle of Bautzen, exhibited in its full lustre the native benevolence of the Saxon character. But the dead still remained unburied, accumulated in frightful heaps, for the most part half naked, having been stripped by those fiends in woman's form, whom so prodigious a concourse of men had attracted in extraordinary numbers to the scene of woe. They lay piled above each other in vast masses around and within the Moczinski redoubt, before the Dippoldiswalde and Plauen barriers, near Löbda, and in the environs of the Grosse Garten. The profound excitement which the war had produced throughout the civilised world was there manifest; for the corpses of the slain exhibited all nations and varieties of men both of Asia and Europe. The blue-eyed Goth lay beneath the swarthy Italian; the long-haired Russian was still locked in his death-struggle with the undaunted Frank; the fiery Hun lay athwart the stout Norman; the lightsome Cosack and roving Tartar reposed far from the banks of the Don or the steppes of Samarcand. Cuirasses, muskets, sabres, helmets, belts, and cartridge-boxes lay strewn in endless disorder, which the inhabitants, stimulated by the love of gain, were collecting, with the vast numbers of cannon-balls which had sunk into the earth, for the French artillery and stores.

38. Napoleon was far from being in-

* The preceding account of Moreau's wound and death, and the council of war which assembled to determine on the retreat, is entirely confirmed, and in part taken from the statement made to me, by my late friend Lord Cathcart, who was with the Emperor Alexander the whole time, and both witnessed Moreau's fall at his side, and was present at the conference.

sensible to the magnitude of the wreck, and gave orders that the principal Saxon sufferers by the siege should be indemnified as far as possible; and then rode on to the height where Moreau had been struck, and caused the distance to the battery from whence the shot issued to be measured, which proved to be two thousand yards. The vast array of the Allies was already out of sight; a few horsemen alone observed the approach of the French, who were actively engaged in the pursuit. Seeing he could not overtake them, the Emperor turned aside and rode to Pirna, where he inquired minutely into what had passed there during the two preceding eventful days. The Prince of Würtemberg, he learned, had that morning been engaged with Vandamme's corps, and was retiring in good order towards Töplitz, closely pursued by that general; Murat, with his horse, and Victor were following on the traces of the left wing, on the road to Freyberg; and Marmont and St Cyr's columns were pursuing the centre on the intermediate roads; while Mortier and the Young Guard advanced along the chaussée of Pirna. After sitting still an hour, he said, in the highest spirits, "Well, I think I have seen it all: make the Old Guard return to Dresden; the Young Guard will remain here in bivouac;" and, entering his carriage, returned to the capital.

39. The battle of Dresden is one of the most remarkable victories ever gained by Napoleon; and if it were memorable for no other reason, it will never be forgotten for this—it was the LAST pitched battle, on a scale commensurate with his former victories, he ever gained.* The advance to Pirna seemed the fatal limit of his prosperous fortune: from the moment that he then relinquished the pursuit, he became involved in calamity; and disaster succeeded disaster till he was pre-

cipitated from the throne. Yet was this great battle a truly glorious achievement, worthy to be placed beside the brightest of his earlier career, and such as well might cast a long ray of light over the dark vista of misfortune by which it was succeeded. Anticipated by the Allies in their masterly march upon Dresden, well-nigh deprived of that vital stronghold by his never conceiving they would have the courage to attack it, he contrived, by extraordinary efforts, not only to arrive in time for its deliverance, but to discomfit the Allies by a signal defeat under its walls. This battle is the only one in his whole career in which Napoleon operated at once by both flanks, without advancing his centre; and the reason of his selecting this singular, and, in ordinary circumstances, perilous mode of attack, was this—not only did his position in front of the intrenched camp enable him to do so without risk, while the great strength of the allied centre forbade an attack on them in that quarter; but by gaining, by success at these two extremities, command of the roads to Freyberg and Pirna, he threw the Allies back, for their retreat to Bohemia, upon the intermediate inferior lines of communication across the mountains, where there was reason to hope that a vigorous pursuit would make them lose great part of their artillery and baggage. He afterwards adopted a similar mode of attack in the commencement of the Waterloo campaign; but his wings there being advanced at the same time, without any centre to support them, like the great fortress of Dresden, became unable to afford each other the requisite support, and lost for the Emperor advantages which had well-nigh reinstated his affairs.

40. The fruits of this victory were as great as its conception had been felicitous. Thirteen thousand prisoners, almost all Austrians, were taken. Six-and-twenty cannons, eighteen standards, and a hundred and thirty caissons, fell into the hands of the enemy. Including the killed, wounded, and missing, on the two days, the allied loss was not short of twenty-five

* The conflicts at Montmirail, Vauchamps, Champaubert, and Montereau, in the campaign of 1814, were combats, not battles: Ligny was a pitched battle, but it could not be called a decisive victory, at least like Napoleon's former ones; for no prisoners or standards, and few guns were taken.

thousand men, while the French were not weakened by more than half the number. But these results, important and dazzling as they were, especially as re-establishing the prestige of the Emperor's invincibility, were but a part of the consequences of the discomfiture at Dresden. Barclay had been ordered to take the road, by Döhna and Gieshübel, to Peterswalde; but the Russian officer who delivered the order said Altenberg, by mistake, instead of Peterswalde. Barclay understood him so: the consequence of which was, that Kleist alone, with his Prussians, was left to follow the great road by Pirna, and the Russians were thrown on the road by Dippoldiswalde and Altenberg, already encumbered with the prodigious accumulation of Austrian carriages. The highway was speedily cut through by the prodigious number of vehicles passing over it; the confusion of artillery and carriages of all sorts became inextricable. Cannon

* Theodore Körner was killed at eight in the morning of the 26th August, in a field near the road from Schwerin to Gadebusch, close to a wood half a league from Rosenberg. A musket-ball which had passed through the neck of his horse, but without killing it, pierced his stomach, and shattered the spine. He breathed his last a few minutes after receiving the wound. He fell with the first shot from the enemy. Count Hardenberg, a relation of the illustrious statesman, was killed by the same volley. They were both buried under an old oak near where they fell, amidst the universal tears of the corps to which they belonged. Körner's name is engraven on the rind of the tree; but he has left a more enduring memorial of his end in the noble song to his sword, written on the morning of the day on which he received his death-wound; and which, more even than all the actions recounted in this history, illustrates the heroic spirit with which Germany was then animated:—

"Thou sword upon my thigh,
Thou beaming glances why?
Thou look'st so pleased on me,
I've all my joy in thee. Hurrah!"

"In the belt of a gallant knight,
My glance is ever bright;
A freeman is my lord,
And this makes glad the sword."

Yes! trusty sword, I'm free,
And fondly cherish thee;
Dear as a bride thou art—
The treasure of my heart."

"Ah! would thy vows were mine,
As my iron life is thine!
If our nuptial-knot were tied,
Where dost thou fetch thy bride?"

"The trumpet-blast at dawn
Tellers in our wedding morn;
When the hollow cannon roars,
We'll meet to part no more."

and baggage waggons were abandoned at every step; and the disorder soon became extreme.

41. Different corps of different nations got intermingled in the crowded defiles: orders were given in a language which one-half who heard them did not understand: supplies of all sorts were wanting, and it was only by straggling on either side that the soldiers for some days could pick up a scanty subsistence. A great quantity of baggage and ammunition waggons fell into the enemy's hands; and before the troops had extricated themselves from the mountains, two thousand additional prisoners had been taken. The poet Körner, who had recovered from the wound he had so perfidiously received at the commencement of the armistice, received a ball in his breast, and died in the action: a few hours before it began, he had composed his immortal lines to his sword,* the testament of his genius to

"Oh, happy bridal state!
All anxiously I wait;
Thou bridegroom, come with speed—
Love's garland is thy meed."

"Why then, in scabbard dight,
Dost clank thou iron delight,
So wild, so warlike now?
My sword, why rustiest thou?"

"Well may I clang, Sir Knight,
I hunger for the fight;
All wild and glad of battle,
Thus in my sheath I rattle."

"Yet keep that narrow cell:
It suits my darling well:
Hide in thy chamber lone,
Till I claim thee for my own."

"Ah! tarry not, I pray,
For in love's garden gay,
The rose has a bloody shroud,
And blossoming Death looks proud."

"Now come from thy scabbard coy,
My bride, my darling joy!
Where our gather'd kindred stand,
Thou shalt glitter in my hand."

"Oh, sumptuous wedding cheer!
What goodly guests are here!
Ay, now the steel will gleam
Like a bride in the morning beam."
Up! up! ye warriors stout;
Out! German riders, out!
Do you feel your hearts grow warm?
Take the loved one to your arm."

Erst following at your side,
A stolen glance she tried;
Now in the face of day,
God gives the maid away.
Haste! give her lips the pledge—
A kiss to the iron edge!
Tide good, or evil tide,
Curst be who fails his bride!

Now bid the charmer sing,
While sparkling sword-blades ring;
"Tis our marriage matins peal!
Hurrah! thou bride of steel!"

Hurrah!

KÖRNER'S *Lyre and Sword*: Edinburgh, 1841.
An animated and faithful translation; but even the kindred English tongue can convey no idea of the force and spirit-stirring fire of the original.

his avenging countrymen. But the most sensible loss which the Allies sustained during the retreat, was that of General Moreau, whose great talents were never more required than at that period, to arrest the evils which then menaced the very existence of the Coalition. But Providence had decreed that the cause of virtue and justice should triumph by its own native strength, and owe nothing to the forces of the Revolution, even in their most exalted or blameless form.

42. Great, however, as were the abilities displayed by Napoleon on this occasion, they would have failed in producing the results which took place, if he had not been seconded to a wish by the imbecility displayed in the execution of the attack upon Dresden. The original conception of that design was in the highest degree felicitous; and by succeeding in placing themselves in overwhelming strength before that capital, and on the direct line of the enemy's communications on the 25th, when Napoleon and his Guards were still a full day's march off, they had completely out-generated that vigilant commander, and brought him, beyond all question, to the very brink of destruction. Had they commenced the assault that afternoon, success was certain, for they were already six to one: St Cyr and his corps would have been beaten, and the whole defensive system of Napoleon on the Elbe broken through and destroyed.

43. Even when, by delaying the attack till next day, they had given time for Napoleon himself to come up, they might still, by commencing the assault early on the forenoon of the 26th, before the bulk of his Guards had arrived, have carried the place, with the additional lustre of having done so when the Emperor in person was in command. By delaying the attack till four in the afternoon, they gained nothing; for Klenau even then had not come up; and they had merely given time to Napoleon to bring up sixty thousand additional men for the defence. It was impossible to expect to carry a fortified place, garrisoned by eighty thousand men, by a *coup-de-*

main; the stroke was now too late, and should not have been delivered. The dispositions next day were equally faulty: for Schwartzberg, contrary to all advice, insisted on extending his left over the open ground beyond Plauen, without any support against Murat's cavalry, to which, in consequence, it fell an easy prey; while by throwing it back, up the side of the ravine of Tharandt, it would have been altogether secure from attack on the top of its precipitous banks. To crown the whole, he placed inexperienced infantry there, without horse to cover them, when thirty thousand noble cavalry were massed together in useless strength behind the centre, which was already so strong from its position on the heights, and the prodigious array of artillery by which it was defended, as to be beyond the reach of danger.

44. In justice to Schwartzberg, however, it must be observed, that these glaring errors are not to be wholly ascribed to him. It is no easy matter, as he himself said, to command an army when emperors and kings are with its general. Such were the dissensions which at this period prevailed at the allied headquarters, that nothing but the most exalted spirit in the bosoms of the sovereigns who ruled its destinies, and the most indefatigable efforts on the part of the able diplomatists who were intrusted with its counsels, prevented the alliance from being broken up within a few days after it began the great contest for the deliverance of Europe. Hardenberg, Metternich, D'Anstett, Lord Aberdeen, and Sir Charles Stewart, laboured assiduously, and not without effect, to reconcile the conflicting jealousies and interests. But it was a herculean task; and nothing but a universal sense of the common danger which they all incurred, could have prevented a rupture taking place. They experienced the truth of the words of Tacitus: "*prospera omnes sibi vindicant, adversa uni solo impunitantur.*"*

* "All claim the credit of fortunate enterprises: disasters are ascribed to one alone."

45. No one would acknowledge responsibility for the advance against Dresden after it failed: to hear the opinions of the military council, you would imagine it had been forced on the army against the universal opinion of its leaders. The Russians loudly exclaimed against the Austrians as the authors of all the calamities, and referred, not without secret satisfaction, to the magnitude of the losses which they, and they alone, had sustained. The Austrians replied, that if Barclay had obeyed Schwartzberg's order to advance on the forenoon of the 27th, all would yet have been repaired. The Prussians lamented a retrograde movement which would, to all appearance, deliver up Berlin to the cruel exactions of the enemy, and paralyse the rising spirit of Germany by the exhibition of its northern capital in chains. Conferences, political as well as military, were frequent during the retreat; the troops of the different nations would take no orders but from their own generals; it was hard to say who really governed the army, or whether it had any direction at all. Schwartzberg deemed it advisable, situated as he was, to avoid any general action, and remain wholly on the defensive; and it was apparent to all, that if Napoleon persevered in making propositions, there was great probability they would be listened to. Such was the untoward prospect of affairs at the allied headquarters, when the face of events was entirely changed, unanimity and concord restored to the combined chiefs, and confidence and mutual esteem to their followers, by a series of events in the exterior circle of the conflict, so marvellous that they defeated all human calculation, and converted the recriminations of misfortune into the song of triumph, over the whole allied states.

46. On the very day on which Napoleon gained his decisive success before Dresden, Vandamme was following up his instructions to throw himself upon the rear of the allied army and await the issue of events on the heights of Peterswalde beyond Pirna.

His orders were precise, to march upon Tetschen, Aussig, and *Töplitz*, and throw himself on the enemy's communications.* He had crossed the Elbe at Königstein, and been engaged with Ostermann, who had been left to watch him with the division of the old Russian Guards and the Russian division of Prince Eugene of Würtemberg. The French general advanced towards Pirna, in order to intercept the line of the enemy's retreat, and the disproportion of force gave him good reason to hope that he would be able to do so;† for he had twenty-seven thousand infantry, three thousand cavalry, and eighty pieces of cannon; whereas the Russian had only seventeen thousand at his disposal. Ostermann in the first instance fell back also towards Pirna; but on the day following, being that on which Napoleon halted his Guard at that place, he was obliged, by the retreat of the Allies and its occupation by the French, to change the direction of his retreat, and retire towards Peterswalde. Vandamme had got before him on the high-road to that place, and the Russians had to fight their way through the enemy's ranks at Gieshübel and Nollendorf. Ostermann's grenadiers, however, forced the passage after a sharp encounter, and he reached Peterswalde, where he collected his forces, and prepared to oppose a stout resistance to Vandamme, who, having failed in barring the way to his columns, was now preparing to follow closely upon his footsteps, and press him vigorously with all his forces.

* "The Emperor desires you to collect all the forces which he has placed at your disposal, and that with them you shall penetrate into Bohemia, and utterly destroy the Prince of Würtemberg if he endeavour to oppose you. The enemy we have beaten appears to be retiring upon Annaberg. His Majesty thinks that you would be able to arrive before him on the communications of *Töplitz*, Tetschen, and Aussig, and by that means take his ambulance, arms, baggage, in fine, all that is in the rear of the army."
—BERTHIER to VANDAMME, 28th August, 1813. BIGNON, xii. 317.

† He had fifty-two battalions, twenty-nine squadrons, eighty guns—(KAUSLER, 653); and Napoleon has told us, "they were thirty thousand strong."—NAPOLEON to ST CYR, 17th August 1813—ST CYR, iv. 867.

47. A great issue now depended on the efforts of these intrepid generals; nothing less than the ruin of the allied army, or the destruction of the corps which had so fearlessly descended into its rear, was at stake. All the roads from Saxony in that direction through the Erzgebirge range, terminate at Töplitz, in the Bohemian plain. If, therefore, Vandamme could make himself master of that point of intersection, he would be in a situation to prevent the Allies debouching from the mountains; while the King of Naples on the one road, Marmont and St Cyr in the centre, and Napoleon with the Guards on the left pass, pressed the rear of their columns, and thus exposed them to almost certain ruin when entangled with several thousand carriages among those narrow defiles and inhospitable ridges. On the other hand, if the French were defeated, they ran a still greater risk of being destroyed by the retiring masses of the grand allied army, who would fight with the energy of despair to reopen their communication with the Bohemian plains. Thus, both parties had equal motives for exertion; both saw clearly the vital importance of the contest, and the meanest soldier in the ranks was as strongly impressed with it as their chiefs. Vandamme now recollected the Emperor's words, that to him it would be given to receive the sword of the conquered, and that now was the time to win his marshal's baton; Ostermann was penetrated with the conviction, that on his efforts, and those of his brave Guards, would depend the safety of their beloved Emperor; and both were firmly resolved to conquer or die on the ground where they stood.

48. Vandamme, sensible of the value of time in the critical operation which had been intrusted to him, and aware that the Young Guard was at Pirna, to give him the support which Napoleon had promised him if required, eagerly descended on the morning of the 29th from the mountains, and approached the Russians, who had taken post in a good position in the plain between CULM and Töplitz, little more than

half a league in advance of the latter town. Ostermann's forces, however, were now much reduced; from the losses and detachments of the preceding days, he could not collect above fourteen thousand men to defend his posts, and the French had at least double the number. Already the near approach of the enemy had spread the most violent alarm among the inhabitants of Töplitz; the whole *corps diplomatique* in particular had taken to flight, and were already far advanced on the road to Deutsch Geyserberg and Laun. The King of Prussia, who was there, and remained at his post, alone succeeded by his coolness in preserving some degree of order in the rear of the combatants. The French general, conceiving he had only to deal with the broken and dejected remains of the army beaten at Dresden, at first brought forward his troops as they successively came up into action, and hurried with only nine battalions to assault the Russian left wing. This rash attempt was speedily repulsed; but the arrival of the division of Mouton Duvernet restored the combat in that quarter, and the Russians in their turn were compelled to give way. An obstinate action with various success now took place over the whole line: the villages of Straden and Priesten were successively carried by the division Philippon, which had just come up; but the latter village was shortly after retaken; and after being three times lost and won at the point of the bayonet, finally remained in the hands of the Russians.

49. The weight of the French attack, however, was directed against the Russian left; and Ostermann, seeing this, brought up three regiments of the Russian Guards to the menaced point—the Bonnet d'Or, Preobazinsky, and Simonefsky grenadiers; and the heroic resistance of these incomparable troops, the flower and pride of the Russian army, opposed a wall of steel to the French, which all the efforts of the assailants were unable to pass. In vain the French batteries were advanced to within pistol-shot, and sent a storm of grape through the Russian

lines; in vain company after company was swept away by the terrific discharges of their musketry; these heroic troops stood firm, constantly closing to the centre as their ranks were thinned. They found there the Russian Thermopylæ, and the greater part of them perished where they stood; but, like the three hundred Spartans under Leonidas, they decided the fate of the world by their blood.* A strong French column in the evening advanced against Priesten, carried it by assault, and moved on to attack the grand Russian battery in the centre; but the heroism of the Guards had gained the requisite time. General Diebitch and the Grand-duke Constantine at this moment arrived with the cavalry and some grenadiers of the Russian Guard, with which this menacing column was stopped; and Vandamme, seeing that the Russians were now receiving considerable reinforcements, drew off for the night to the ground he occupied before the action.

50. Prudence now counselled a retreat to the French general; for the superiority which he had on the first day was at length turned the other way; and the increasing force of the enemy, who were seen issuing at all the passes from the mountains, threatened not only to expose him to ruinous odds, but might even entirely overwhelm his corps. He had been promised support, however, by Napoleon, and distinctly ordered to advance to Töplitz;† the Young Guard, eight-and-twenty thousand strong, was only a few hours' march in the rear; and he never for a moment conceived it possible that, having assigned to him the onerous duty of cutting off the retreat of the right wing of the allied army, that great commander would

* "C'est sans triompher que le nombre l'accable,
Et sa mâle Vigueur toujours en même point,
Succombe sous la force, et ne lui cède point."

CORNEILLE, *Cinna*, Act iv. scene 1.

† Vandamme received, on the night of the 29th, a distinct order from Berthier to push on to Töplitz; it was brought to him by a colonel of the Swiss état-major.—JOMINI, iv. 401, note.

leave him unsupported in the perilous attempt. The marshal's baton danced before his eyes: instances were frequent, in the earlier history of the revolutionary wars, of a similar act of daring being attended with the most glorious results; in war, as in love, he who nothing ventures will nothing win. Influenced by these considerations, to which the native resolution of his character gave additional weight, he resolved to maintain his ground, and disposing his corps, now reduced by the losses of the preceding days to twenty-three thousand men, in the best order, he awaited the approach of the Allies in the neighbourhood of Culm.

51. The hourly increasing numbers of the enemy now gave them an opportunity, of which they skilfully availed themselves, of crushing the audacious invader who had thus broken into their rear in the hope of receiving the sword of the conquered. Their dispositions were speedily made. Vandamme had taken post on the heights in front of Culm, looking towards Töplitz, his right resting on the foot of the mountains—his centre crossing the great road leading to Töplitz—his left in the plain, as far as the hamlet of Zigeley. This was the weak point of his line, as the ground afforded no natural advantages; and the allied generals therefore resolved to overwhelm it with superior forces, and drive both it and the centre up against the mountains, where escape, at least for the artillery and carriages, would be impossible. With this view, Barclay de Tolly, who had now assumed the command, as well from his rank as in consequence of the wound of Ostermann, who had lost an arm on the preceding day, directed the Russians under Raefskoi to attack on the left; while the right, composed of twenty squadrons of Russian cavalry, under the orders of Prince Gallitzin, and the Austrian corps of Colloredo, with the division Bianchi in reserve, was destined to make the decisive onset on the French left, which was unsupported in the plain. A screen of Russian light and heavy horse stretched across the chaussée, with a

powerful artillery, and united the right and left wings. The total force thus brought to bear against Vandamme was little short of sixty thousand men, of whom ten thousand were admirable horse.

52. The battle began by a vigorous charge of the Russian cavalry on the flank of the French left in the plain, which being outflanked, and turned at the same time that Colloredo's corps advanced against its front, was speedily thrown into confusion, and driven up against the centre, in front of Culm. Steadily the Austrians moved directly towards that town, while the French left, now entirely broken, and pushed on by the cavalry in flank, was dispersed over the plain like chaff before the wind. Vandamme, now seriously alarmed, despatched a fresh brigade to stop the progress of the enemy on the left; but they too were overwhelmed in the confusion, and the allied horse, sweeping round their rear, had already approached the village of Arbesau, not far distant from the great road to Pirna. At the same time a sharp conflict was going on on the right, and the Russians were gradually gaining ground on their adversaries posted on the slopes of the mountains. Matters were in this critical state when a loud fire of musketry, followed by several explosions, was heard on the summit of the pass, towards Nollendorf, directly in the rear of the French column, and on the only line by which they could escape. Joy at first illuminated every countenance in the French ranks, for no one doubted that it was the Young Guard pushed on from Pirna to their support, which would speedily re-establish the fortunes of the day. But this satisfaction was of short duration, and was converted into corresponding consternation when the Prussian standards were seen on the summits; and the news circulated through the ranks, that it was Kleist with eighteen thousand Prussians who thus lay directly on their only line of retreat. In effect, the Prussian general, who had been directed to retire by Schönwald and Nollendorf, and had the evening be-

fore received orders from Alexander to descend upon the right flank of the French towards Graupen, finding the road which he followed insupportably bad, had made his way across to the great chaussée, and had just seized and blown up some French caissons at the top of the pass.

53. And now a scene ensued, unparalleled even in the varied annals of the revolutionary war. Vandamme, seeing his danger, drew off his troops from the heights on the right in front of Culm, and, rallying as well as he could the broken remains of his left, formed his whole force into a column, the cavalry in front, under Corbineau, the artillery in the centre, and the infantry on the flanks and rear. Having made these dispositions, which were the best that circumstances would admit, he began his retreat, and got through Culm in safety. But in the little plain beyond, extending to the foot of the gorge of Tellnitz, the Russian and Austrian horse precipitated themselves on all sides upon the retreating mass, while a formidable array of artillery, by incessant discharges, threw its rear into confusion. Disorder was already spreading rapidly in the ranks, and Vandamme had resolved to sacrifice his guns to save his men, when, to complete their misfortunes, the advanced guard reported that the defile which they must immediately ascend was occupied in strength by a Prussian corps! Despair immediately seized the troops; all order and command were lost. Corbineau, at the head of the horse, dashed up the pass with such vigour, that though the ascent was so steep that in ordinary circumstances they could hardly have ascended at the gentlest trot, he pushed right through the Prussian column at the gallop, cut down their gunners, and seized their artillery,—which, however, he could not carry away,—and got clear through.

54. The Prussians now imagined that they were themselves cut off, and at the point of ruin; and their whole infantry, breaking their ranks, rushed like a foaming torrent headlong down the defile, to force their way through

the barrier which seemed to oppose their retreat into Bohemia at its foot. In the middle of the gorge they met the French column, in similar disorder and impelled by the same apprehensions, which was struggling for life and death to get up, with the Russians thundering in their rear! A scene of indescribable horror ensued. Close pent in a steep and narrow pass, between overhanging scurs and rocks, nearly thirty thousand men on the two sides, animated with the most vehement passions, alike brave and desperate, contended elbow against elbow, knee against knee, breast against breast, bayonet against bayonet, mutually to force their way through each other's throng.* In the confusion Kleist was seized by the French, but speedily delivered; Vandamme was made prisoner and finally retained by the Prussians. The remainder of his corps, who were crushed through or out of the defile, immediately dispersed through the neighbouring woods and wilds; and, throwing away their arms, made the best of their way over the mountains to Peterswalde, where they were received and re-armed by St Cyr's corps.† Nearly twelve thousand men, including Corbineau's cavalry, escaped in this manner, though in woe-ful plight, and totally ruined as a military force; but the whole remainder of the corps, including both Vandamme's and Haxo's men, were either killed or

made prisoners. The latter amounted to seven thousand; and sixty pieces of cannon, two eagles, and three hundred ammunition waggons were taken. The total loss of the French in the two days was not less than eighteen thousand men, while that of the Allies in the same period did not exceed five thousand.‡

55. On the morning of the 30th, thus fraught with disaster to Napoleon, he was with great complacency surveying the different positions of his corps on the map, and anticipating the brilliant accounts he was so soon to receive of the operations of Vandamme in rear of the enemy. "At this moment," said he to Berthier, "Marmont and St Cyr must have driven the Austrian rear-guards on Töplitz; they will there receive the last ransom of the enemy. We cannot be long of hearing news of Vandamme; and we shall then know what advantages he has been able to derive from his fine position. It is by him that we shall finish in that quarter. We will leave some corps of observation, and recall the rest to headquarters. I calculate that, after the disasters experienced at Dresden, it will take at least three weeks for the army of Schwartzemberg to re-organise itself, and again take the field. It will not require so much time to execute my projected movement on Berlin." Such were Napoleon's views

* "An iron scene gleams dreadful o'er the fields,

Armour in armour lock'd, and shields in shields,

Spears lean on spears, on targets targets throng,

Helm's stuck to helms, and man drove man along.

The floating plumes unnumber'd wave above,

As when an earthquake stirs the nodding grove;

And level'd at the skies with pointing rays,
Their brandish'd lances at each motion blaze."

Iliad, book xiii.

† "Generals Philippon and Duvernôt are occupied in rallying what remains of their troops; their number, they think, exceeds ten thousand. We are furnishing them with cartridges and cannon; in fine, we would put them in a respectable situation, if they can only succeed in recovering their spirits."—*ST CYR* to *BERTHIER* 31st August 1813; *ST CYR*, iv. 389.

‡ Of this number, no less than 3200 were killed and wounded in the Russian imperial guard, whose numbers at going into the battle did not exceed 8000 men, cavalry included. The great loss sustained by so small a body of men, being fully half of the infantry who were seriously engaged, is a decisive proof, when they were not broken, of the extreme severity of the action, and the gallantry of their resistance. This action deserves to be borne in mind as the most desperate and glorious engagement of any body of the Russian or German troops during the war, and it is to be ranked beside the heroism of the British at Albuera, where, out of 7500 English engaged, the loss was 4300. It must be observed, however, that nearly half of the English loss was occasioned by the surprise of the Polish lancers, which cut off nearly three entire battalions; so that the amount of the respective loss is not in these instances an exact test of the comparative heroism of those worthy rivals in arms.—*See LONDON-DERRY*, 124, 125, for the Russian loss at Culm; and *ante*, Chap. LXVI. § 49, for that of the British at Albuera.

on the morning of that eventful day, and the forenoon was spent in making arrangements for his favourite design of marching on Berlin, which was at once to demonstrate the reality of his victory, and again spread the terror of his arms through the whole north of Germany.

56. In the afternoon of the same day, the most alarming news began to spread from the side of Pirna. It was rumoured that a great disaster had been sustained beyond the mountains; it was even said that Vandamme's corps had been totally destroyed. Soon the frequent arrival of breathless and disordered horsemen confirmed the dismal intelligence; and at length Corbineau himself, wounded and covered with blood, made his way to the Emperor, still armed with the Prussian sabre which, in the *mêlée*, he had exchanged for his own. From him Napoleon heard authentic details of the extent of the calamity; and he learned with grief, that not only the grand allied army was saved, but that it would bear back to Prague the trophies of a victory. Napoleon received the details of the disaster coldly, and said—"To a flying enemy you must either open a bridge of gold or oppose a barrier of steel. Vandamme, it appears, could not oppose that barrier of steel." Then, turning to Berthier, he said, "Can we have written anything which could have inspired him with the fatal idea of descending into the plain of Bohemia? Fain, look over the order-book." Nothing, however, it is said, was discovered to warrant the descent from Peterswalde. "Well," said he to Maret, "this is war! High in the morning—low enough at night. From a triumph to a fall is often but a step." Then taking the compasses in his hand, he mused long on the map, repeating unconsciously the lines of Voltaire, which he was frequently in the habit of quoting,—

"J'ai servi, commandé, vaincu, quarante années;
Du monde entre mes mains j'ai vu les destinées,
Et j'ai toujours connu qu'en chaque événement,
Le destin des états dépendait d'un moment."

* *La Mort de César*, Act i. scene 1.

57. But, in truth, without disputing the incalculable influence of a few hours, or even minutes, on the fate of nations during war, nothing is more certain than that, in this instance, the misfortunes of Napoleon were owing to himself; and that the attempt which he made, according to his usual custom, to throw the blame upon others, was as unjust as it was ungenerous. He maintained stoutly in writing, as well as speaking, thinking that Vandamme was killed, that he had given him positive orders to intrench himself on the summit of the mountains, and not descend into the gulf at their feet;† and yet, only two days before, Berthier, by his orders, had enjoined him "to march directly upon Töplitz;"‡ and on the very day on which the disaster occurred (30th August), Berthier had written to St Cyr, informing him of Vandamme's success on the first day against Ostermann,§

† "That unhappy Vandamme, who seems to have been killed, had not left a single sentinel on the mountains, nor any reserve in any quarter; he engulfed himself in a hollow, without feeling his way in any manner. If he had only left four battalions and four pieces of cannon on the heights in reserve, that disaster would not have occurred. I had given him positive orders to intrench himself on the heights, and encamp his corps there, and send down into Bohemia nothing but parties to disquiet the enemy, and obtain news."—*NAPOLEON TO ST CYR*, 1st September 1813; *ST CYR*, iv. 392.

‡ "*March direct to Töplitz; you will cover yourself with glory.*"—*BERTHIER TO VANDAMME*, 29th August 1813.—"Three or four hours only were required to retreat to Nollendorf, where he would have been in an impregnable position; but Vandamme conceived he was not at liberty, after this positive order, to effect that movement. What would he have said to Napoleon, if, on his retreat, he had met him at Nollendorf, as he had been led to expect would be the case, and the enemy meanwhile, resuming his ground at Culm, had secured the retreat of the Grand Army?"—*Victoires et Conquêtes*, xxii. 5, note.

§ "I have received your letter of the 6th, from Reinhard Grimme, in which you describe your position behind the 6th corps, [Marmont]. The intention of his Majesty is, that you support the 6th corps: but it is desirable that you should select for that purpose a road to the left, between the Duke of Ragusa and the corps of General Vandamme, who has obtained great success over the enemy, and made two thousand prisoners."—*BERTHIER TO ST CYR*, 30th August 1813; *ST CYR*, iv. 388.

from which he anticipated the most glorious results. In fact Napoleon himself admitted, in conversation with St Cyr, that he should have moved forward the Young Guard from Pirna to support Vandamme;* in which case not only would no disaster at all have been incurred, but the movement on Töplitz, which was ably conceived, would have led to the destruction of Kleist's corps, and the disorganisation of the whole right wing of the allied army. Decisive success was within his grasp, when he neglected to seize it, and permitted the advantage to pass over to the enemy, by retaining his Young Guard inactive at Pirna, during the two most vital days of the campaign.

58. His panegyrists endeavour to account for this neglect, by observing that he was seized with vomiting at Pirna, and obliged to return to Dresden in great pain on the afternoon of the 28th. But, admitting this to have been true, it is no reason why he should not have advanced Mortier with the Young Guard to support a corps charged with so perilous and momentous a mission as that of stopping the retreat of a hundred thousand men. No man knew better than he did what risk is incurred in striving to obstruct the retreat of a large army; his own success on the Beresina must have been fresh in his recollection. Even on the night of the 29th it would have been time enough to have moved up the Young Guard;† for they required

* "The Emperor admitted to me, in conversation on the 7th September, that if he had not halted his Guard at Pirna on the 28th, but on the contrary, followed it up on the traces of Vandamme, he would have found a great opportunity of striking a blow in the neighbourhood of Töplitz."—*St Cyr*, iv. 137, 138.

† "On the 29th, in the evening, the Emperor must have known that Vandamme had fought the whole day, against not only the forces of Ostermann, but those which Barclay had brought up. He had, therefore, the whole of that night to make his dispositions, which a man such as he could easily have done in an hour; and if he conceived the position of Vandamme hazardous, as unquestionably it was, he had time to draw his corps back, or support it by his Guard. The latter corps could have marched to Nollendorf or Peterswalde in a few hours; that is, before Kleist's Prussians, who were encamped on the night of the 29th at Fürstenwalde, had some up."—*St Cyr*, iv. 129.

only a few hours to march from Pirna to Peterswalde. The truth was, that Vandamme neither disobeyed orders, nor was forgotten: he acted strictly according to his instructions, and was fully present to the Emperor's mind, who watched his march with the utmost anxiety. But Napoleon judged of present events by the past. He conceived that the apparition of thirty thousand men in their rear, immediately after a severe defeat in front, would paralyse and discomfit the Allies as completely as it had done in the days of Rivoli and Ulm; and he was unwilling to engage the Young Guard in the mountains, as it might ere long be required for his own projected march upon Berlin. He forgot that his conscripts were not the soldiers of Austerlitz and Jena; that the Russian Guards were not the Austrians of 1796; and that Ostermann was neither Alvinzi nor Mack.‡

59. While these momentous events were going forward in the neighbourhood of Dresden, and in the Bohemian valleys, events of scarcely less importance were in progress among the ravines of Upper Silesia, and on the sandy plains in front of Berlin. Napoleon, on leaving the command of the army of Silesia to Macdonald, had given that general instructions of the most judicious description, and which, if duly followed out, would have probably prevented the dreadful disaster which he experienced. They were, to "concentrate

‡ "Vandamme's defeat was a double misfortune; for it was to be ascribed to an evident oblivion of the first principles of war, which prescribe the pursuit to extremity of a beaten enemy. Napoleon should unquestionably have pursued, *à l'outrance*, the defeated army of the allied sovereigns. There was the vital point of the war; all the rest was merely secondary, and could have been repaired. There also was the greatest chance of disorder, from the number of chiefs who commanded the different corps. If he had quitted Pirna to flee to the succour of Macdonald, routed on the Katzbach, the proceeding would have been at least intelligible, but he did not then know of it; and his return to Dresden, having no other object but to prepare the march upon Berlin, was one of the greatest faults of his whole career. Independent of its cutting short the fruits of victory, it became the principal cause of Vandamme's defeat."—*Jomini*, *Vie de Napoleon*, iv. 403, 404.

trate his troops and march towards the enemy, so as to be in a situation to give his aid to the operations of the Grand Army against Dresden or Bohemia; but, if attacked by superior forces, to retire behind the Queis and hold Görlitz; and if hard pressed, and the Emperor was far advanced in his attack, by Zittau, upon Prague, to retire to the intrenched camp at Dresden: keeping in view that his principal care should be to preserve his communication with him." Instead of following this judicious direction, Macdonald, who was inspired with that unfounded contempt for his adversaries which so often proved fatal to the lieutenants of Napoleon, no sooner found himself, after the departure of the Emperor to Dresden on the morning of the 24th [*ante*, Chap. LXXX. § 21], at the head of three corps and a division of cavalry, numbering eighty thousand combatants, than he broke up early on the 26th to attack the enemy. In place of following up the Emperor's instructions, being impressed with the belief that the enemy was continuing his retreat in the direction of Breslau, and that he had nothing to do but follow upon his traces, he divided his troops, for the facility of marching and getting supplies, into five columns, spread out over a front twenty-four miles in breadth, from Schönau to Liegnitz. In this straggling manner they were to cross the Katzbach and advance towards Jauer; the right wing under Lauriston, moving by Schönau and the foot of the mountains; the centre, under Macdonald in person, by the Wüthende-Neisse on Weinberg; while the left, led by Sebastiani and Souham, in the absence of Ney, who had been despatched to command the army destined to act against Berlin, was to move by Liegnitz to pass the KATZBACH there, and fall on the right of the enemy.

60. By a singular coincidence, Blucher, having rested his troops in their position in front of Jauer on the 24th and 25th, and being informed of the departure of the Emperor for Dresden on the morning of the first of these days, which the halt of his advanced

guard on the Katzbach entirely confirmed, had on the very same day broken up from his ground to resume the offensive. He kept his troops, however, much more in hand, and was better qualified in consequence to take advantage of any omission on the part of his adversaries, or guard against disaster on his own side. He directed his three corps to pass the Katzbach between Goldberg and Liegnitz; York and Sacken on the right, towards the latter place, directing their attack against Ney's corps; and Langeron on the left, on the side of Goldberg, moving towards Lauriston and Macdonald. At two o'clock in the afternoon, the troops were so far advanced that the enemy were in sight, and Blucher made his dispositions for a general attack.

61. The better to conceal his movements from the enemy, and confirm them in the illusion under which they laboured, that the Allies were flying before them, he concealed his troops behind some eminences which lay in their front, on the plateau of Eichholz, and awaited the movements of his opponents. A heavy rain, accompanied with thick mist, which had fallen the whole day, contributed to conceal the movements of the opposite armies from each other; and it was only some Prussian batteries placed on the top of the eminences, which, by the vivacity of their fire, made the French suspect that any considerable body of the enemy were in their way, and that a general engagement might be expected. Macdonald immediately gave orders for his columns to deploy at all points between Weinberg and Klein Tintz; but it required a long time for the orders to be conveyed along so extensive a line; and Blucher, seeing that the enemy had only partially crossed the ravine of the Neisse, so that the troops which had got through were in a great measure unsupported, and judging the opportunity favourable, and the enemy unprepared, gave the signal for attack.

62. Macdonald's right, so far as hitherto come up, when thus unexpectedly assailed, was supported by

the rocky banks of the Wüthende-Neisse; but his left was in an elevated plain beyond that river, which its rear columns were still crossing, wholly uncovered except by the cavalry under Sebastiani, the squadrons of which were at that moment engaged in passing the defile. Blucher, perceiving the weak point of his adversary's line, detached Wassilchikoff, at the head of the cavalry of Sacken's corps, to charge the French horse which had mounted upon the plateau, and so uncover their left. This order was immediately executed, and with the happiest effect. The Russian cavalry, superior in number, and greatly more experienced, approached the French dragoons on the extreme left, both in front and flank; while Karpoff's Cossacks, who had been sent round by a long detour, were to threaten their rear in the middle of the action. Sebastiani's horse, little prepared for the danger, had to struggle through the narrow defile of Kroitsch, at Nieder Crain, already encumbered with the whole artillery of Ney's corps, which was passing it at the time. The consequence was, that the squadrons arrived successively on the plateau on the other side, where they were immediately charged by a formidable body of horse, four thousand strong, in close array, both in front and flank. Unable to resist the shock, the French dragoons were driven back headlong into the defile in their rear, from which they had just emerged; and two brigades of infantry, which were brought up to support them, shared the same fate. Sacken's main body now came up, and, as the incessant rain prevented the muskets going off, charged with loud hurrahs with the bayonet against the unprotected infantry of Ney's corps, which broke, and was driven headlong over the precipices into the roaring Katzbach and Wüthende-Neisse, where vast numbers were drowned.* The guns, still entangled in the de-

* The name "*Wüthende-Neisse*," (mad or furious Neisse,) indicates with what a raging torrent that stream, at ordinary seasons insignificant and fordable in every part, descends during floods from the Bohemian mountains.

file to the number of twenty-six, with their whole ammunition waggons, were taken, and fifteen hundred prisoners on this wing fell into the enemy's hands.

63. To complete their misfortunes, Souham, who was marching towards Liegnitz, still further to the French left, hearing the violent cannonade to his right, turned aside, and, moving in its direction, arrived at the mouth of the defile of Nieder Crain at six o'clock. This movement, ably conceived, and in the true military spirit, would in ordinary circumstances have probably restored the battle, by throwing a fresh division into the scale when the Allies were disordered by success. As matters stood, however, it only aggravated the disaster. Souham's men arrived at the edge of the ravine of Kroitsch, just as Sebastiani's horse were beginning to break on the plateau opposite. Uniting them to Sebastiani's cuirassiers, which were left in reserve, Souham immediately led his men down the defile, and hastened to ascend the front, in hopes of reaching the opposite plateau in time to arrest the disorder. But just as they began to mount the gorge on the opposite side of the glen, they met the torrent of fugitives from the other side, who were hurrying down, with the bloody Russian and Prussian sabres glancing in their rear. The confusion now became inextricable. The dense and ardent columns pressing up, were for the most part overwhelmed by the disordered mass of horse and foot, mixed together, which was driven headlong down; and such of the battalions and squadrons as succeeded in forcing their way through the throng, and reached the summit, were speedily swept away and driven back into the gulf when attempting to deploy, by the impetuous charges of a victorious and superior enemy, now firmly established on the summit, who with loud hurrahs asserted the triumph of Germany.

64. While this decisive success was in the course of being gained on the allied right, their left, under Lange-ron, had also come into collision with

the French right, under Lauriston, near Hennersdorf. The combat there was more equal, and very obstinate: both sides stood their ground with great resolution; but towards night the French general, having learned the disaster on his left, fell back, still, however, in good order, toward Praunitz. The action seemed over for the day, when an accidental circumstance renewed it, and augmented the losses of the French general. At nine at night, two fresh divisions of Ney's corps, now under the orders of Souham, having come up, Macdonald in haste crossed them over the Katzbach, at the ford of Schmogwitz, below the confluence of the Neisse, and directed them against the extreme right of Sacken's corps, now advanced to the very edge of the plateau, and engaged in driving the other division and Sebastiani's horse into the flooded torrents at the foot of the precipitous banks. These divisions were under the command of General Tarayre; they brought with them sixteen pieces of cannon, and ascended to the top of the plateau with a good countenance. Sacken, however, who had received intelligence of their approach, was on his guard: his troops were readily made to front to the right, and these fresh divisions were forced by Count Lieven and General Neweroffski again over the Katzbach, with considerable loss.

65. Next day, Blücher early put his columns in motion to follow up his successes; while Macdonald, in great consternation, drew back his shattered bands towards Goldberg. It would seem, however, as if the elements had conspired with the forces of the enemy to accomplish his destruction. The floodgates of heaven seemed literally opened the whole night; the rain fell without an instant's intermission in tremendous torrents; and next morning, not only were the raging waters of the Neisse and the Katzbach unfordable at any point, but several of the bridges over those streams, as well as over the Bober, which also lay farther back in the line of the French retreat, were swept away by the floods which descended from the chain of the

Riesengebirge. Lauriston, sorely pressed by Langeron, only succeeded in getting across the foaming torrents by the sacrifice of two-and-twenty pieces of cannon, his whole ammunition waggons, and two thousand prisoners. On the same day, the Allies occupied Goldberg, and, continuing the pursuit, on the day following crossed the Katzbach, and drove the enemy back at all points towards the Bober. All the bridges over that river had been swept away except that at Buntzlau; and of necessity the whole French divisions were directed to that point. In the course of the rapid retreat thither, forty pieces of cannon, and several hundred ammunition waggons were sacrificed, and fell into the enemy's hands.

66. A still more serious disaster, however, awaited the French in the course of this calamitous retreat. The division Puthod of Lauriston's corps had been despatched on the 26th, by a circuit at the foot of the mountains by Schönau and Jauer, in order to menace the rear of the Allies, and harass the retreat which was deemed on their part inevitable. He was already far advanced on his journey, when news of the disaster on the Katzbach arrived; and he at once felt the necessity of hastening to regain the main body of the army. Overlooked by the Allies in the first heat of the pursuit, Puthod succeeded without any great difficulty in retiring during the 27th; but, on arriving at the Bober, he found the bridge at Hirschberg swept away by the floods, and he was obliged to come down the right bank of the torrent to endeavour to effect a passage. Next morning he got as far down as Löwenberg, but there too the bridge was destroyed; and after several vain attempts to re-establish it, he was obliged to wind his toilsome and devious way, anxiously looking out for a passage, towards Buntzlau. In doing so, ill-luck made him fall in with the advanced posts of Langeron's corps, who, wholly unsuspecting of his arrival, were pursuing their opponents towards the Bober. The Russian general immediately collected his forces, and made dispositions for an attack.

67. General Korff, with his own horse and Czorbatoff's infantry, was despatched so as to cut off the retreat of the French back again up the Bober, which they seemed at first disposed to attempt; while Rudziwicz was posted on the road to Buntzlau, so as to render all escape impossible. Surrounded in this manner by greatly superior forces, in the most frightful of all positions, with a roaring impassable torrent in his rear, the brave Frenchman did not despair, but taking ground on the hill of Plagwitz, nearly opposite to Löwenberg, prepared to resist to the last extremity. There he was speedily assailed on every side; Rudziwicz attacked him on one flank, while Czorbatoff and Korff charged him on the other, and a powerful train of artillery opened upon his columns in front. Shaken by such an accumulation of force, as well as by the evident hopelessness of their situation, the French broke, and fled in wild confusion down the hill towards the river; on the banks of which they were, with the exception of a few who swam across the foaming torrent, made prisoners. Nearly two thousand were slain or drowned. A hundred officers, including Puthod himself, and his whole staff, three thousand private soldiers, two eagles, and twelve pieces of cannon, with the whole park of the division, fell into the enemy's hands, who did not lose a hundred men.

68. Such was the great battle of the Katsbach; the counterpart to that of Hohenlinden, and one of the most glorious ever gained in the annals of European fame. Its trophies were immense, and coincided almost exactly with those which had, twelve years before, attended the triumph of Moreau [*ante*, Chap. XXXII. § 33]. Eighteen thousand prisoners, a hundred and three pieces of cannon, and two hundred and thirty caissons, besides seven thousand killed and wounded, presented a total loss to the French of twenty-five thousand men.* When Macdonald re-form-

ed his broken bands behind the Queis, he could with difficulty collect forty-eight thousand around his standards instead of seventy-three thousand, who, when he received the command from Napoleon, on the latter's setting out for Dresden, crowded the banks of the Bober. The loss of the Allies was very trifling, considering the magnitude of the success gained: it did not exceed four thousand men. Indeed, there was scarcely any serious fighting; the French having been surprised by Blucher's attack when wholly unprepared for it, and subsequently prevented, by the dreadful weather and the destruction of the bridges in their rear by the floods, from reuniting their broken bands, or forming any regular mass for resistance to the enemy.

69. Great as were the successes thus achieved by the army of Silesia, and deservedly as they have given immortality to the name of Marshal Blucher, it may be doubted whether he would not more completely have succeeded in his object of disorganising the French army, if, instead of directing the weight of his forces against the enemy's left, he had thrown it against their right wing, placed at Goldberg. It was by that town that the whole French communications were preserved, and consequently a reverse there would have cut off Souham and the French left, and paralysed the whole army. On the other hand, when the line of operation on the French right was taken, it must be admitted that the Prussian general showed admirable skill in the selection of his ground for the principal attack, where a precipitous glen in the rear of the French rendered retreat on their part impossible; in the concealment of his own troops till half the enemy were past the ravine; and in then falling on the portion which was drawn up on the plateau, with such a concentration of infantry and cavalry as at once rendered resistance hopeless, and assistance through the narrow gorge impossible. The movements of the French general will not admit of a similar apology. In direct violation of the instructions of Napoleon—which were to concentrate his

* "The battle of the Katsbach and its results cost us ten thousand killed and wounded, and fifteen thousand prisoners."—*BIGNON*, xii. 813.

troops and decline battle except with a superiority of force—he rashly advanced against an enterprising general at the head of an army superior both in number and in warlike experience to his own. His troops were so scattered over a line from Liegnitz to Schönau, nearly twenty-four miles in length, that, when assailed in his centre and left on the most critical ground by the concentrated masses of the enemy, he had no adequate force at hand to arrest the disaster consequent on their first successful onset. Nor was the management of his principal force less injudicious than its direction. By directing the bulk of his troops on the great road from Goldberg to Jauer, Macdonald would at once have menaced his opponent's communications, covered his own, and secured to himself a comparatively safe retreat in case of disaster; whereas, by accumulating them on the left, he both uncovered his vital line, left untouched that of his adversary, and got his troops entangled in the rugged ravines of the Katzbach and Wüthende-Neisse, where any check was the certain prelude to ruin.

70. While these important operations were going forward in Saxony, Bohemia, and Silesia, the campaign had also been opened, and an important blow struck to the north of the Elbe, in the direction of Berlin. Although nothing is more certain than that the vital quarter of the war was to be found on the Bohemian or Silesian frontier, where the great masses of the Allies were concentrated, yet it was by no means in that direction that Napoleon was desirous to begin hostilities, or most anxious to obtain success. He was much more intent upon making himself master of Berlin; it was to clear his flank of Blücher, before engaging in that enterprise, that he opened the campaign by the march into Silesia. The first question which he asked when he returned to Dresden, beset by the allied grand army, was, whether there was any news from Berlin; and it was to prosecute that favourite design that he made the fatal stop of the

Young Guard, at Pirna, and returned himself to Dresden, in the midst of the pursuit of Schwartzberg's army. Napoleon, however, in his anxiety to dazzle the world by the capture of the Prussian capital, and to gratify his private pique by the defeat of Bernadotte, committed an extraordinary oversight in the estimate which he formed of the strength of the enemy to whom he was opposed in that quarter. He conceived that the Prince-Royal had only eighty-five thousand men in all under his command, including those who, under Walmoden, were opposed to Davoust at Hamburg; whereas, such had been the efforts made to reinforce the army in the north of Germany, and such the enthusiasm with which, under the sense of recent wrongs, they were seconded by the people, that Bernadotte had now ninety thousand effective men under his immediate command, of whom nearly twenty thousand were admirable cavalry, besides above forty thousand who were opposite to Hamburg, or guarded the banks of the Lower Elbe. With this imposing force, he took post at Charlottenburg to cover Berlin, and concentrate his troops as soon as the denunciation of the armistice gave reason to anticipate a resumption of hostilities.

71. Meanwhile, Oudinot received orders to march onwards, and open the campaign; but he not being prepared immediately to obey the Emperor's directions, the Prince-Royal advanced his headquarters to Potsdam, and his numerous army occupied Jüterback, Trebbin, and the villages of Saarmund and Belitz. On the 21st, the French army moved forward, consisting of three corps of infantry, viz. Bertrand's, Reynier's, and Oudinot's, with Arrighi's cavalry, mustering in all about eighty thousand men; and, leaving the great road from Torgau to Berlin, made a flank movement towards the Wittenberg road. This speedily brought it in contact with the foremost posts of Bernadotte's army, and a rude conflict ensued with the advanced guard of Bulow's Prussians, which terminated

in the forcing of the defile of Thyrow, and the establishment of Oudinot's forces on the heights behind Trebbin, and in front of Mittenwalde. Bernadotte, perceiving a general battle was inevitable to prevent the enemy from making their way to Berlin, immediately gave orders for concentrating his forces, and the greater part of the day following was occupied in bringing them into line. But before they were all assembled, General Thumen, with a body of Prussians, was attacked by Reynier with so great a superiority of force at Trebbin, that he was forced to retire with considerable loss: the enemy carried the defile of Jühnsdorf; and the Prince-Royal, now seriously alarmed for his left, drew back the troops which he had at Trebbin and Mittenwalde, and brought up Tauenzin's whole corps to Blankenfelde. Oudinot's object in thus directing the weight of his forces against the enemy's left, was to beat his forces in detail towards Blankenfelde and Teltow, and force the Prince-Royal, driven up against Potsdam, to throw back his left, and abandon Berlin. With this view, Reynier, in the centre, was directed to march on GROSS BEEREN; Bertrand, on the right, on Blankenfelde; while the commander-in-chief himself, with the left, moved on Ahrensdorf. He was not now above twelve miles from Berlin, which he fully expected to enter on the following day.

72. The battle began early on the morning of the 23d, by the French right, under Bertrand, who had the shortest distance to go over before arriving at the enemy, falling with great vigour on Tauenzin, who with his gallant Prussians held Blankenfelde. Bulow, who was in reserve behind the centre, upon this began to extend his columns to the left, to aid his brethren in arms in that quarter. The movement, however, was countermanded by the Prince-Royal; for Tauenzin had made such a vigorous resistance, that not only were Bertrand's attacks repulsed, but several prisoners were taken, and the line was perfectly safe in that direction. Matters, however, wore a more serious aspect in the

centre, where Reynier, at the head of twenty-four thousand Saxons, supported by a strong reserve, attacked and carried Gross Beeren, and established himself close to the very middle of the allied line. Bernadotte, sensible of the dangerous consequences of this success, instantly took the most vigorous measures to arrest it. Bulow's whole corps was stopped in its march to the left, and brought up to the support of the centre, which had retired, still, however, bravely fighting, to some woods in the rear of the village. Meanwhile Reynier, little anticipating a second conflict, and deeming the combat over, was preparing to establish his bivouacs for the night on the ground he had won, when Bulow, at the head of thirty-five thousand Prussians, fell upon him.

73. The measures of the Prussian general were taken with great ability, and he was admirably seconded by the intrepidity of his troops. While he himself advanced with the main body of his forces to recover Gross Beeren in front, Borstel, with a strong brigade, was moved on to Klein Beeren, in order to turn the right of the enemy, and the Swedish horse were advanced so as to threaten their left. The troops advanced in two lines, preceded by sixty pieces of cannon, and followed by the cavalry in reserve. Incessant rain had fallen the whole day, which prevented the muskets from going off; but the cannon on both sides soon opened a tremendous fire, while, in rear of the Prussian pieces, their infantry advanced with the precision and coolness of the troops of the Great Frederick. At length they arrived within grape-shot range, and Bulow immediately ordered a charge of bayonets by the front line deployed, while the second followed in column. The struggle, though violent, was not of long duration: Reynier, assailed by superior forces in front, could with difficulty maintain his ground; and the attack of Borstel on his right, and the opening of the Swedish cannon, supported by an immense body of Russian horse, on his left, decided the conflict. He was already beginning to retreat, when the Prussians in front, with loud hurrahs, charged

with the bayonet. Gross Beeren was speedily won; several batteries were carried; and the allied horse, by repeated charges on the left flank, completed his defeat. Oudinot's corps, alarmed by the violence of the cannonade at this period, stopped their advance on Ahrensberg, and, hastening to the centre, came up in time to arrest the disorder. Behind these fresh columns the broken Saxons were enabled to re-form; but it was too late to regain the day. The Prussians, indeed, ignorant of the strength of the new army which they had thus encountered in the twilight, retired from the pursuit, and even at the moment evacuated Gross Beeren; but the defeat of the French centre determined the retreat of their left; their whole army retired to Trebbin, while Bulow reoccupied Gross Beeren, and Tauenzlein advanced to Jühnsdorf.

74. Although the battle of Gross Beeren was not attended with such extensive trophies in the field as those of Culm or the Katzbach, yet in its moral influence, and the effects which it ultimately had on the fortunes of the campaign, it was almost equal to either of these memorable conflicts. Fifteen hundred prisoners, thirteen cannon, and a large quantity of baggage, were taken; but these were its most inconsiderable results. The moral influence of the defeat of the attack on Berlin was immense. Great had been the consternation in that capital when the enemy's columns were advanced almost to within sight of its steeples, and every house shook with the discharges of their cannon. They remembered Jena and six years of bondage, and every heart throbbed with emotion. Proportionally vehement was the joy when news arrived at ten at night that the enemy had been repulsed, that his columns were retiring, and the capital saved; and the general transports were increased by the circumstance that the triumph was exclusively national—Bulow and Tauenzlein having, with their new Prussian levies, almost alone had a share in the action. The warmest thanks were next day voted by the municipality to the Prince-Royal

as their deliverer; joy beamed in every countenance; great numbers of the Saxon prisoners, carried away by the torrent of patriotic feeling, petitioned to be allowed to serve in the ranks of the Fatherland, and formed the nucleus of the Saxon corps which soon appeared in the lines of the Allies: while several of the officers, who had served under Bernadotte in the campaign of Wagram, wept for joy at finding themselves again in the patriotic ranks of Germany, and under the banners of their old general.

75. The battle of Gross Beeren was immediately followed by other successes, naturally flowing from it, which materially augmented its trophies. On the 25th Bernadotte moved forward, though very slowly and with extreme circumspection; but the enemy were so scattered that he could not fail, with his superiority in cavalry, to gain considerable advantages. Luckau had been fortified by the French, and garrisoned by a thousand men; but the governor, not conceiving himself in sufficient strength to withstand the assault of the Allies, by whom he was soon surrounded, capitulated when summoned, with nine pieces of cannon, and considerable magazines. A still more serious disaster soon after occurred on the side of Magdeburg. Gerard, with his division, five thousand strong, had issued from that fortress as soon as he heard of the advance of Oudinot, in order to co-operate in the general movement against Berlin; but the reverse of Gross Beeren, of which, from the hostile feeling of the country, he had received no information, followed by the advance of the Allies, led him, without being aware of it, into the very middle of the enemy's columns. Finding Belzig occupied by the Cossacks of Chernicheff, he withdrew to Leibnitz, where he took post to await further orders. There he was assailed next day by a division of the Prussians under Hirschfeld; and after a gallant resistance, being attacked in rear by Chernicheff's Cossacks, he was totally defeated, and compelled to take refuge in Magdeburg, with the loss of fourteen

hundred prisoners and six pieces of cannon. These advantages made the total trophies of the battle of Gross Beeren four thousand prisoners, besides an equal number killed and wounded, and twenty-eight guns; while the Allies were not weakened by more than half the number. These results, considerable as they were, might have been greatly augmented, if Bernadotte had made a proper use of the superiority of force, and great preponderance in cavalry, which he enjoyed. But he was so cautious in his movements, that though he had no enemy to withstand him in the field, and the French fell back at all points, he took eleven days to advance from Gross Beeren to Rabenstein, near the Elbe, where he established his headquarters on the 4th September, though the distance was little more than fifty English miles.

76. Napoleon was at Dresden when these disastrous tidings from Bohemia, Silesia, and Prussia arrived with stunning rapidity after each other. His whole projects for the campaign, which seemed to be opening in so auspicious a manner by the glorious victory of Dresden, were at once blasted. The moral effect of that great triumph was destroyed. The Allies, instead of retreating to Prague in consternation, brought with them the trophies of Vandamme and a considerable part of his corps as prisoners. The battle of Culm had turned into cries of joy the desolation which began to be felt in the valleys of Bohemia; the army of Silesia was flying in disorder before its terrible antagonists, and loudly demanding the Emperor and his Guards as the only means of stemming the torrent; the attack on Berlin had failed. Instead of electrifying Europe by the capture of the Prussian capital, the northern army was thrown back to the Elbe, while the Prussian landwehr was singing the pæans of victory, and unheard-of enthusiasm animated the whole north of Germany. Napoleon was strongly affected by these reverses, the more so as they were quite unexpected; and he immediately began, as usual, to lay

the whole blame upon his lieutenants.* Circumstances, however, were so pressing, and succours were demanded from so many quarters at once, that it was no easy matter to say to which direction the Emperor should turn with the anxiously-expected relief. His first design was to reinforce the army of the north, and resume in person, and with the aid of his Guards, his favourite project of a march upon Berlin. But Macdonald's representations of the disastrous state of the army in Silesia were so urgent, and the advance of the enemy on that side was so threatening, that he at length determined, though much against his will, to direct his steps towards Bautzen and the banks of the Bober.

77. In pursuance of this resolution, orders were immediately given to stop at all points the pursuit of the allied columns into Bohemia; the broken remains of Vandamme's corps, intrusted to the care of Count Lobau, after being inspected at Dresden by the Emperor, were reconducted to the inhospitable summits of the mountains at Gieshübel and Peterswalde; St Cyr's corps was stationed between the latter point and Altenberg; while Victor occupied the passes and crest of the range from that to the right towards Freyberg. The command of the army of the north was intrusted to Ney;

* "My cousin,—The Duke de Tarente (Macdonald) has allowed himself to be driven back on Görlitz. It is possible that I may be obliged to march on Bautzen to-morrow or the day after. Occupy quickly, then, the defensive positions."—*NAPOLÉON to St Cyr*, 1st September 1813. *St Cyr*, iv. 391.

"My cousin,—Write to the Prince of Moskwa (Ney). We have just received intelligence from the Duke de Reggio (Oudinot), who has thought proper to come and place himself, by two marches, above Wittenberg. The result of this untimely movement is, that the corps of General Tauenzeln, and a strong party of Cossacks, have come from the neighbourhood of Luckau and Bautzen, and threaten the communications of the Duke de Tarente. *It would indeed be difficult to have less judgment than the Duke de Reggio.* He has not been able to attack the enemy; and he has succeeded in exposing one of his corps separately. If he had attacked the enemy boldly, he would have carried everything before him."—*NAPOLÉON to BERTHIER*, 2d September 1813. *St Cyr* vi. 393; and *JOMINI*, iv. 417, 418, note.

the Emperor being with reason dissatisfied with Oudinot, for the senseless dispersion of his force which had led to the check at Gross Beeren, as well as for the eccentric direction of his retreat towards Wittenberg, instead of Torgau. That grave error had put in hazard the interior line of communication between the army of the north and the centre of operations at Dresden, and even exposed Macdonald's rear and supplies to the risk of being cut off, or disquieted by the clouds of light horse which inundated the plains beyond the Elbe, from Bernadotte's left.

78. To prevent this inconvenience, and keep up the communication between the armies of Ney and Macdonald, Marmont's corps was withdrawn from the pursuit of the allied grand army, and transferred to Hoyerswerda, about thirty miles from the right bank of the Elbe, nearly midway between the two armies; while the Emperor himself, taking with him the Guards and reserve cavalry, and calling to his standard Poniatowski's corps, which had hitherto lain inactive in observation at Zittau, proceeded with sixty thousand choice troops to reinforce the dejected remains of the army which had been shaken by the disasters of the Katsbach. Thus, after all the losses from the preceding defeats were taken into account, sixty thousand men were left under St Cyr, Victor, and Murat, to make head against the grand army of the Allies on the left of the Elbe; a hundred and twenty thousand, under the Emperor in person, were directed against Blücher in Silesia; seventy thousand, under Ney, were opposed to the army of Bernadotte; and eighteen thousand, under Marmont, were in observation, and kept up the communications on the right bank of the Elbe.

79. The Emperor's own movement, as usual, was attended with the desired effect. On the 3d of September he set out from Dresden in the evening, and slept that night at the chateau of Hartau, near Bischofswerda. The Guards and cuirassiers of Latour-Maubourg made a magnificent appearance as they

defiled along the road. The departure of the Emperor was accelerated by the intelligence received that day, of the capture of a considerable convoy of ammunition between Bautzen and Bischofswerda, by the Cossacks from Bernadotte's army. Marmont was pushed forward in that direction, to prevent a repetition of the insult, and finally took post at Hoyerswerda. On the following morning, Napoleon set out by break of day, and early in the forenoon came in contact with the advanced guard of Blücher, which was strongly posted on the high grounds of Stromberg and Vohlaerberg, beyond Hochkirch, on the road to Görlitz. The Prussian generals soon perceived, from the increased activity in the French army, and the splendid array of troops which crowded the roads coming from Dresden, that the Emperor was before them; and Blücher, faithful to the instructions he had received, and the general system agreed on at Trachenberg, immediately fell back. The French, continuing to advance, soon reoccupied Görlitz; while Blücher's retiring columns repassed successively both the Queis and the Neisse. Napoleon slept on the night of the 5th in the parsonage manse of the parish of Hochkirch; and, on the following morning resumed his march in pursuit of the allied troops, hoping that the impetuous character of the Prussian marshal, flushed with his recent victory, would lead him to halt and give battle. Blücher, however, still continued to retreat; and at noon, the Emperor, altogether exhausted with fatigue, entered a deserted farmhouse by the wayside, where he threw himself on some straw in a shed, and mused long and profoundly on the probable issue of a contest, in which the Allies never gave him an opportunity of striking a blow in person, and the armies of his lieutenants, when left to themselves, hardly ever failed to be involved in disaster. At the close of his reverie he started up, and ordered the Guards and cuirassiers to return to Dresden, leaving Marmont in such a situation at Hoyerswerda, as to be able to give assistance,

in case of need, either to Ney or MacDonald. His presence at the Saxon capital was much required; for already the Allies were beginning to resume the offensive on the frontier of Bohemia, and a terrible disaster had been incurred to the north of the Elbe.

80. Ney, who had been appointed to replace Oudinot, in the command of the army of the north, had received the Emperor's instructions to march direct to Baireuth, where a corps was to be waiting him to bring reinforcements. He would there be only three days' march from Berlin; and so low did Napoleon still estimate the Prussian landwehr and light horse, that he persisted in assuring him, that if he would only keep his troops together, and put a good countenance on the matter, all that rabble would soon disperse, and he would find the road to the Prussian capital lie open before him.* The Emperor, from this opinion, and his high estimate of Ney's courage and capacity, entertained no doubts whatever of success, and repeatedly said to those around him, that they would soon hear of a glorious victory. Ney, in pursuance of these instructions, and impelled not less by the ardour of his own disposition than the express command of Napoleon, immediately put himself in motion. He arrived at the headquarters of the army on the 4th of September, and found the whole troops arranged under shelter of the cannon of Wittenberg. This state of things sufficiently evinced the entire incapacity of Oudinot for separate command; for he had now altogether lost his communication with the central point of Dresden, and permitted

the whole right bank of the Elbe, between that fortress and the Saxon capital, to be inundated by a deluge of Russian and Prussian light horse, who did incredible mischief to the communications and supplies of both French armies. Having reviewed his troops, and encouraged them by the assurance of prompt succour from the Emperor, Ney immediately set out on the morning of the 5th, directing his march by Zahna and Saïda, so as to regain the high-road from Torgau to Berlin, which was his proper line of communication with the headquarters at Dresden.

81. On the evening of the same day the army was established on a line between these two villages, the Prussian advanced posts rapidly retiring before them. On the other hand, the Prince-Royal no sooner ascertained that the enemy were marching in strength against him headed by his old comrade Marshal Ney, with whose determined character in the field he was well acquainted, than he took measures for concentrating his army. Setting out from Rabenstein, where his headquarters had been established, he marched across the country, so as to regain the great road between Torgau and Berlin. Tauenzeln, who formed the advanced guard of his army, reached DENNEWITZ early in the morning of the 6th, and soon found himself in front of the vanguard of the French army, which, in its march from Zahna and Saïda, had approached that village on the route to Jüterback, where the great road from Torgau would be regained. Tauenzeln immediately drew up his troops in order of battle, and unmasked a powerful battery, the fire of which arrested the progress of the Italian troops under Count Bertrand. The French general, however, was not disconcerted, but, bringing up his remaining divisions, re-established the combat; his artillery, posted on higher ground, played with advantage upon that of the Allies; and Morand, advancing with his division, which was composed in great part of veterans, sensibly gained ground, and threatened the left wing of the Allies, which had first come into action, with total defeat.

* "From Baireuth you will be only three days' march from Berlin. The communication with the Emperor will then be entirely established, and the attack on the Prussian capital may take place on the 9th or 10th instant. All that cloud of Cossacks and rabble of landwehr infantry will fall back on all sides when your march is once decidedly taken. You will understand the necessity of moving rapidly, in order to take advantage of the present state of inefficiency of the allied grand army in Bohemia, which might otherwise recommence operations the moment that they became aware of the departure of the Emperor."—*Instructions to NEY*, 2d September 1813. *Str Cya*, iv. 394.

82. Succour, however, was at hand ; for Bulow, who commanded the allied centre, which was marching up immediately after their left wing, and in the same direction, no sooner heard the cannonade on the side of Dennewitz, than he hastened his march, and arrived with twenty thousand Prussians, whom he deployed with the corps under Hesse-Homburg in reserve ; and not contented with remaining in position, he immediately directed the troops, by an oblique advance, against the flank of Bertrand's corps, which was now pushing Tauenzien before it, in front of Dennewitz. The Prussians advanced in echelon by the left, but before they could reach the enemy, Reynier, with the Saxons, had come up to the support of Bertrand, and a combat of the most obstinate description ensued ; the French centre and left presenting a front on the two sides of an oblique triangle to the enemy, and the Prussians assailing them on both its faces. After four hours' hard fighting, however, the enthusiasm of the Prussians prevailed over the intrepidity of the Saxons. The village of Niedergörsdorf and Göhlsdorf were successively carried, and the French centre and left driven back in the direction of Oehna.

83. Ney, however, now came up in haste with Oudinot's corps, which was stationed to the left of the Saxons, and immediately in front of Bulow's right. The arrival of this fresh corps, fully twenty thousand strong, made an immediate change upon the field of battle. The two corps, uniting, turned fiercely on their pursuers, and, being superior in numbers, not only regained Göhlsdorf, but drove the Prussians entirely across the road to the high grounds near Wolmsdorf, from which Bulow had originally come. That general upon this brought forward his reserve ; the Saxons, though they combated bravely, were forced in their turn to retreat ; and Göhlsdorf, the object of such fierce contention, a second time fell into the hands of the Prussians. Oudinot then again advanced the division of Pacthod, and it in the first instance gained ground upon the enemy,

and restored the combat. It was hard to say to which side ultimate success would incline, when at this critical moment, the Prussian brigade of Borstel, which was marching in the rear across the country towards Jüterback, informed, near Dalichow, of the critical state of matters on the allied right, appeared on the field, and immediately attacked, with loud cheers, the extreme left of Oudinot in flank. At the same time, the Prussians under Thumen, who had combated behind Dennewitz ever since the morning, resuming the offensive, vigorously attacked and carried that village, and drove back Bertrand's corps, who were excessively fatigued with their long march and subsequent combat, to a considerable distance. The effect of this double advantage occurring at the same time was decisive. Ney, finding both his wings driven back, and his centre in danger of being enveloped by the enemy, gave orders for a retreat at all points. This retrograde movement, however, was conducted with great regularity ; the French braved, without shrinking, the destructive fire of grape-shot from the enemy's numerous batteries, which were now hurried to the front ; and several charges of the Prussian horse were repulsed by the rolling fire and steady conduct of their retiring columns.

84. Hitherto the Prussian army, not in all above forty-five thousand combatants, had singly maintained the conflict, with heroic resolution, against the French, who numbered seventy thousand sabres and bayonets. The Swedes and Russians, composing nearly a half of the army, had not yet come into action, having composed the right of the column of march, which was advancing with the left in front. But Bernadotte, with this powerful reserve, having broken up in the morning from Lobbesee and Eckmannsdorf, had now reached Kaltenborn, a league in rear of Dennewitz, where the battle was raging, and, forming his whole force in order of battle, advanced rapidly to the support of the Prussians, now well-nigh exhausted by their long and arduous exertions. The appearance of this imposing mass on the field of battle,

where Ney had no longer a reserve on his part to oppose to them, was decisive. Seventy battalions of Russians and Swedes, supported by ten thousand horse of the two nations, and preceded by a hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, advanced in beautiful array of columns of attack, with sufficient space left between them for the front file to deploy, and form a continuous line. Ney, who had not been able to succeed in his attack upon the Prussians alone, was in no condition to maintain his ground when this fresh and formidable body came upon him. Disorder and vacillation speedily became visible in his retreating columns; soon four thousand Russian and Swedish cavalry advanced at the gallop to support the points of the Prussian line, where the contest was most obstinately maintained; and the ranks were no longer kept, when Bulow's men, opening with admirable discipline, made room for the infantry of the reserve to advance, and the Russian cavalry, charging furiously through the apertures, swept like a torrent round the French retreating columns.

85. The retreat soon turned into a flight. In vain Ney endeavoured to hold firm, with the Saxons in the centre, who were hitherto unbroken, near Rohrbeck; the troops there, too, were seized with a sudden panic on seeing their flanks turned by the Swedish and Russian horse, and, breaking into disorder, fled in confusion. The effects of this rout of the centre were in the highest degree disastrous; the enemy rushed into the huge gap thus formed in the middle of the line, and, vigorously pursuing the fugitives, separated the right from the left wing. In vain Arrighi brought forward his dragoons to cover the retreat; a thick cloud of dust enveloped the advancing squadrons of the pursuers, and rendered them more terrible from being unseen. Arrighi's men were shaken by the terrors by which they were surrounded, and wavered before reaching the enemy. Soon they were overwhelmed by the torrent, and drawn into its vortex, before the Russian sabres were upon them. At length

the whole army presented nothing but a vast mass of fugitives. Ney did all that courage and coolness could suggest to arrest the disorder, but it was in vain: his utmost efforts could only preserve some degree of steadiness in the retiring cannoneers, who, by rapidly working their guns, prevented the total destruction of the centre; but the wings were irrevocably separated. Oudinot, with his own corps, and a part of the Saxons, retreated to Schweinitz; while Ney himself, Bertrand, and the cavalry, got off to Dahme. On the day following, additional successes were gained by the Allies: Ney's rear-guard was attacked by the victorious Prussians, and defeated, with the loss of fifteen hundred prisoners; and during the night six hundred more were taken by their light horse, with eight pieces of cannon. It was not till the 8th that the French general succeeded in reuniting his shattered and divided columns, under cover of the cannon of Torgau.

86. The loss of the French in the battle of Dennewitz was very severe. It amounted, in the battle and subsequent retreat to Torgau, to thirteen thousand men, of whom one-half were prisoners; with forty-three pieces of cannon, seventeen caissons, and three standards; besides six thousand stand of arms which the fugitives threw away to accelerate their flight. The Allies lost nearly six thousand men, of whom five thousand were Prussians; a clear proof upon whom the weight of the battle had fallen, and with whom the glory of the victory should rest. But its moral consequences were far more important. The Prussian troops, of whom a large proportion were landwehr, had here in a pitched battle defeated the French, led by one of their most renowned chiefs: the stain of Jena was washed out: the days of Rosbach and the Great Frederick seemed about to return; and Berlin, no longer trembling for foreign occupation, might send forth her sons conquering and to conquer on the brightest fields of European fame.

87. The French military historians, confounded at this defeat—which they

could neither ascribe to the cold, as in Russia, nor to the force of overwhelming numbers, as on the second day at Culm, nor to flooded rivers, as at the Katzbach—have laboured to save the honour of their arms by ascribing it entirely to the incapacity of Marshal Ney; who had no head, they affirm, for previous combination, and never received any illumination of genius till the enemy's balls were whistling through the bayonets. Without ascribing the disaster entirely to this cause, it must be admitted that the conduct of the French marshal on this occasion was not such as to support his great reputation. Like Oudinot at Gross Beeren, he was surprised by an attack on his line of march when little prepared for it, and under circumstances when such an event was not only probable, but certain. When Ney took the command of the army under the cannon of Wittenberg, it was completely concentrated, and occupied a position of all others best adapted to act with effect on the army of the Allies, then occupying a line above twenty miles in length, from Rabenstein to Saida. Instead of this, he brought up his columns to the attack in so desultory a manner, that he was never able to take any advantage of the great superiority of force which he might have thrown upon any point of the enemy's line, and in the end had the whole hostile array on his hands, before he had been able to make any impression on the corps first engaged. In justice, however, to the French marshal, it must be observed, that he was on this occasion very indifferently aided by his lieutenants; and that Oudinot, in particular, stung to the quick by having been deprived of the command, by no means pressed forward into action with the alacrity which might have been expected from his daring character. This jealousy of the marshals of each other, already so long known and sorely experienced in the Peninsular War, had risen to such a height in Germany as to render all cordial co-operation impossible, except under the immediate eye and authority of the Emperor.

88. Nor was the conduct of the Prince-Royal, though crowned with success, by any means beyond the reach of censure. Great as his victory was, it would have been much more decisive, if, instead of marching with his reserves on Eckmannsdorf and Wolmsdorf, that is, in the rear of the Prussian line of battle, at the distance of five miles, he had followed the march of Tauenzlein and Bulow by the great road direct on Dennewitz, which would have brought an overwhelming force on the flank of the French at the crisis of the battle, just as Ney did to the Allies at Bautzen, and Blucher to Napoleon at Waterloo. Still more, his pursuit was languid and inefficient; he made no sufficient use of the unparalleled advantage of having utterly routed the enemy's centre, and separated their two wings from each other: his noble cavalry were not, on the day after the battle, thrown with sufficient vigour on the traces of the flying foe; and an army which had been routed on the field, in a way hardly to be equalled in modern war, was allowed to retire with scarcely any molestation to the Elbe, and reunite its dissevered wings at Torgau, while the victor remained inactive at Jüterback, only a few miles from the field of battle.

89. But if the conduct of Bernadotte, both at Dennewitz and Gross Beeren, was open to serious reproach, and indicated not obscurely a wish to spare the native troops of Sweden, and not even to push the advantages gained by the Prussians to the utmost, the vigour, resolution, and capacity evinced by the Prussian generals, especially Bulow and Borstel, in bearing up, for half the day, against superior forces on the part of the enemy, were most conspicuous. In particular, the perfect unanimity and concord with which they supported each other on every trying occasion, and the true military instinct which led them, at once and without orders, to hasten where the cannon was loudest and the danger greatest, were beyond all praise; and, seconded by the devotion and valour of their brave though inexperienced

followers, mainly contributed to the victory on both these glorious days. Never, in truth, was a more animating spectacle witnessed than the Prussian army exhibited at that period. Jealousies there were none in that noble array; individual interests, separate desires, were forgotten; old-established feuds were healed; recent rivalries were suppressed: one only feeling, the love of country, throbbed in every heart; one only passion, the desire to save it, gave strength to every hand.

90. The repeated defeats which he had thus experienced in every quarter, and under circumstances where the faults of generalship appeared to be pretty equally divided between the contending parties, at length brought home to Napoleon the painful conviction, that neither his own troops nor those of his opponents were what they once had been. However much the adulation of his military courtiers might at the time, or the fond partiality of his subsequent panegyrists may still be inclined to ascribe these misfortunes to errors of conduct on the part of the generals at the head of the movements, or to inconceivable fatality, their reiterated occurrence, under every variety of command, officers, and troops engaged, was sufficient to demonstrate to all unprejudiced observers, that the long-established superiority of the revolutionary troops was at an end. In presence of the Emperor, indeed, and with the consciousness that his redoubtable Guards and cuirassiers were at hand to arrest any disorder, the conscripts evinced extraordinary enthusiasm, and still performed heroic actions. It was the able use which he made of that formidable reserve of fifty thousand chosen veterans, in battles where he commanded in person, which so long arrested the tide of disaster. But where this great cause of enthusiasm and tower of strength was wanting, the usual appearances of a sinking cause had become visible.

91. The marshals wanted vigour, and had become either timid and over-circumspect, or were unduly rash and

overweening in their movements. The troops generally went into battle with courage, but they failed to sustain it with constancy; and on the first appearance of a reverse, took to flight by whole battalions, or laid down their arms, like the Austrians in the beginning of the war, in large bodies. Thirty thousand prisoners and two hundred guns had been taken by the Allies in pitched battles, within three weeks after the resumption of hostilities; while the Russians retreated from the Niemen to Moscow, a distance of six hundred miles, in presence of four hundred thousand men in close pursuit, without one battalion being broken, or one standard taken. A change, therefore, had plainly come over the spirit of the contest: the old enthusiasm of the Revolution was worn out, the military array of the empire had broken down; while its oppression had roused an indomitable spirit of resistance on the other side, and its antagonists had learned, in combating, to conquer it. The effects of this truth being perceived, were in the highest degree important. Napoleon lost confidence in his troops and his fortune, and no longer attempted those daring strokes which had so often in former campaigns secured him success; while his marshals evinced that dread of responsibility, and nervousness about consequences, which are the invariable attendants, save among those whom a sense of duty supports, of the secret anticipation of disaster.

92. While these events were taking place in the northern line of operations, the allied grand army had resumed the offensive on the Bohemian frontier. No sooner was Schwartzenberg made aware, by the cessation of the pursuit of his columns, that Napoleon had set out in a different direction, than he put his troops in motion, again to threaten the Saxon capital. On the 5th September, Wittgenstein crossed the mountains with the right wing, and pushed his advanced guard to Nollendorf, and on the following day he reached Gieshübel; while Zieten occupied Gross Kota, and Count Pahlen and Prince Eugene of Würtem-

berg, who had crossed by Heppersdorf, took possession of Nentmendorf. On the day following, Wittgenstein, continuing his march, occupied Pirna, and his advanced posts again appeared in the environs of Dresden; Schwartzenberg himself, with his heavily laden Austrians, also approached the mountains in the rear of the Russians, and on the 8th reached Aussig, near Töplitz. At the same time, certain intelligence was received that Benningsen, with the Russian reserve, full sixty thousand strong, was advancing by rapid strides from the Oder, and might be expected on the Elbe before the end of September. This information was accompanied by the opinion from St Cyr, that "the system of the enemy is to hazard nothing on the points where the Emperor is ascertained to be with the troops which he always brings along with him. It may be presumed, therefore, that he will undertake no operation against Dresden so long as his majesty, with his Guards, is known to be in the neighbourhood of that town; but that he will march against it as soon as they are withdrawn, the great bulk of his force being concentrated within one march of Dresden, on the passes of Altenberg, Fürstenwalde, and Peterswalde."

93. Napoleon had no sooner received this intelligence than he took measures for the concentration of his troops on the side of Silesia, by ordering Macdonald to retire to Bautzen, near which Poniatowski was placed, so as to form his left, while he himself, with the Guards, set out in the direction of Pirna; Marmont was drawn back with his corps to Dresden, and a division, ten thousand strong, was stationed at Leipzig under Margaron. The repeated checks he had received made him feel the necessity of contracting his circle of operations, and stationing his generals at such distances from the central Saxon capital, that in a day or two he might be able, with his Guards and reserve, to carry succour to any quarter where their assistance might be required. Meanwhile the Russian army, in great strength, was concentrating in the environs of Culm and Töplitz,

while the Austrians were coming up behind them, though still at a considerable distance, from the side of Prague. The Emperor felt strongly the necessity of delivering some decisive blow, to extricate himself from his difficulties; and immediately after he joined Marshal St Cyr, in the neighbourhood of Pirna, on the evening of the 7th, he had a long conversation with that able general, in the course of which he admitted that "he had lost a brilliant opportunity of striking such a blow, by halting the Young Guard at Pirna when Vandamme was advancing to Culm;" but still inclined to the opinion that it should now be directed against Blücher or Bernadotte, and insisted that the grand allied army would attempt nothing during his absence. Impressed with these ideas, which St Cyr in vain combated with military frankness, he returned to Dresden the same night, meditating a great blow against Bernadotte, and consequent triumphal entry into Berlin. But early next morning he was roused from his dream of security, and recalled to the advanced posts on the side of Pirna by the sound of cannon, which announced a formidable attack by the Russian vanguard in that quarter.

94. Quick as lightning, Napoleon moved up his Guards and cuirassiers to the scene of action; and after reconnoitring the enemy's columns from the heights of Gahrnig, determined that, although the great body of his reserves had not yet come up, it was advisable not to delay the attack, as by the next day the plateau which the enemy occupied would be so strongly supported by artillery as to be altogether unassailable. He, accordingly, forthwith put his troops in motion, and, aiming his movement against the left of the allied advanced guard, he directed the weight of his forces towards Liebstadt, whereby he threatened their communications with Töplitz. To avoid that danger, Wittgenstein immediately withdrew his men, and joined Kleist at Nollendorf; while at the same time Klenau's Austrians, who had been pushed on towards Chem-

nitz, retired to Marienberg. The arrival of Napoleon was felt like a shock along the whole line of the Bohemian hills. Satisfied with this advantage, Napoleon retired to his quarters at Dohna, where he received from Ney's aide-de-camp the whole details of the disaster at Dennewitz. The Emperor interrogated him closely as to all the particulars, and explained in the most lucid manner the causes of the reverse to the generals present, without giving vent to any ill-humour whatever against his lieutenant, but ascribing it all to the difficulties of the military art, which, he said, were far from being generally understood.* He had just received the account of one of the greatest disasters of the campaign, and which in the end was attended with the most ruinous effects to his fortunes; yet he was not only calm enough to discuss the subject, as he would have done the wars of Scipio and Hannibal, but he had the magnanimity—rare on his part, under similar circumstances—to exculpate entirely the general whose errors had had no small share in inducing it.

95. On the following morning at day-break, St Cyr's corps pursued its march, and reached without opposition, the village of Ebersdorf, on the Geyser-

* Napoleon's conversation on this occasion, which is reported by St Cyr, who was present, was very remarkable:—"The Emperor interrogated the officer minutely, and entered with the most imperturbable *sang-froid* into the movements of the different corps; after which he explained, in a manner equally lucid and satisfactory, the causes of the reverse, but without the slightest expression of ill-humour, or any manifestation of displeasure at Ney, or any of the generals engaged. He ascribed the whole to the difficulties of the art, which, he said, were far from being generally known. He added that, one day or other, if he had time, he would write a book on the subject, in which he would demonstrate its principles in a manner so precise that they should be within the reach of all military men, and enable them to learn the art of war as they learn any other science. I (St Cyr) replied, that it were much to be wished that the experience of such a man should not be lost to France, but that I had always doubted whether it were practicable to form such a work, though, if any one could do so, it was himself; that it seemed extremely doubtful whether the longest experience or practice was the best school for learning the art of a

berg—the highest point of the mountains between Saxony and Bohemia; and from the heights adjoining which the eye can discover a considerable expanse of the plains from Töplitz towards Prague. No sooner had the Emperor set foot on the frontier, than he despatched a messenger to the King of Saxony to announce that the enemy was thrown back into Bohemia, and then halted to gaze at the prospect which opened before him. Immediately at his feet descended the rapid slope of the Geyserberg, its sides, naked rocks or hanging woods, with the road, which was much cut up by the retreat of the allied troops from Dresden, descending in zigzag down the steep, till it was lost in the gulf at its feet. The artillery with extraordinary alacrity threw themselves into the hollow, and already the descent of the army had commenced, when the progress of the column was stopped by a carriage breaking down in a hollow part of the way; Drouot was sent forward to report on the passage, and he stated that it was impracticable till it was repaired. A few hours only, however, were required for that purpose, and Napoleon had himself shown, at the passage of the Landgrafensberg, the evening before the battle of Jena,

commander; that of all the generals, whether on our own side or that of our enemies, whom we had seen at the head of the armies of Europe, in all the long wars which the French Revolution had occasioned, none appeared to have gained by experience; and that I did not make any exception in his own case, as I had always considered his first campaign in Italy as his *chef-d'œuvre* in war. He said I was right, and that, considering the limited force he then had at his disposal, he regarded it as his greatest campaign; that he knew but one general who had constantly gained by experience, and that was Turenne—whose great talents were the result of profound study, and who had approached nearest to the end which he proposed to demonstrate, if one day he had time to compose the work which he had mentioned. That conversation was brought on by the recital of one of the greatest disasters of the campaign—a disaster attended with terrible effects to the interests of many, and of none so much as himself. He spoke of it, nevertheless, as calmly as he would have done of the affairs of China, or of Europe in the preceding century."—See ST CYR, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 149, 150.

[*ante*, Chap. XLIII. § 41]. how quickly the most formidable obstacles of that description yield to the vigorous exertions of a skilful body of engineers.

96. St Cyr eagerly pointed to the plain at the foot of the mountain, where the Russian and Prussian army were to be seen in great masses, deploying, widening, and extending, as if in preparation for an immediate attack. From the rapidity of their movements, the confusion which prevailed, and the hurrying of officers to and fro, it was evident that they expected to be instantly assailed, for which they were little prepared, and that their leaders were in great anxiety for the result, as their situation and the nature of the ground in their rear would not admit of a retreat in presence of the enemy; while a huge column of smoke, the agreed-on signal, rising from the elevated summits of the *Millerschauer*, the highest point of the range, told to the whole north of Bohemia that the dreaded invasion of the Franks had commenced. The Grand-duke Constantine's reserve of the Guards were the first in position, next Wittgenstein's Russians, and Kleist's Prussians, formed in close array; but still there was no appearance of the Austrians; and St Cyr strongly urged the Emperor to hasten the attack, when his whole forces were at hand, and the Russians and Prussians, in a position from which they could not recede, stood alone exposed to his blows. Napoleon, who, from the elevated position which he occupied, beheld every rank, almost every man, in the hostile array, remained with the telescope at his eye, intently gazing on the enemy for above an hour; but at the end of that time he said, "I will not attack the enemy in that position, but cautiously conceal my intention. Let the engineers continue to repair the road to-day and to-morrow; and suffer every one to rest in the belief that we are to have a great battle; if you are attacked on the mountain I will support you." So saying, he returned to Pirna much dejected at the failure of his designs, and the day after re-entered Dresden; having thereby lost the only oppor-

tunity which presented itself, during the campaign, of engaging on favourable terms the Russians and Prussians when detached from the Austrians.

97. St Cyr's sinister presentiments were not long of being verified. No sooner were the Allies aware, by the cessation of the advance, that Napoleon was no longer on the summit of the *Erzgebirge*, than they again resumed at all points their offensive movement. Wittgenstein ascended directly towards *Nollendorf*; and two regiments of Russian hussars attacked, without waiting the arrival of the other troops, the French division of *Dumonceau* on the summit of the mountain, cut to pieces one battalion, made prisoners of another, and forced back the whole to *Peterswalde*, with the loss of above fifteen hundred men, which compelled St Cyr to draw back his whole corps to *Gieshübel*. Meanwhile Napoleon was busied with orders for the construction of a bridge over the *Elbe* at *Pirna*, and the formation of a great series of redoubts around it, to secure the passage of the army from one bank of the *Elbe* to the other; as also intrenchments on a large scale near *Gieshübel*, to bar the entrance from Bohemia in that quarter. Everything announced a resolution to hold by the *Elbe* to the last extremity, and, without resuming the offensive to any considerable degree at any one point, to maintain that line as long as possible, and take advantage of any errors the enemy might commit in their operations on an immense circumference around it. During all this time, however, the troops, perched on the inhospitable summits of the *Erzgebirge*, were starving; the few villages which were to be met with in those elevated regions, devastated by the triple passage of armies over them, were entirely laid waste: so universal was the destruction, that it was with the utmost difficulty, and only by repairing a ruin, that quarters were got for the Emperor himself in the parish manse at *Breitenau*. The conscripts, stretched on the cold ground, had no protection against the frosty nights and frigid dews of autumn, nor was their satisfaction in-

creased by beholding their adversaries comfortably encamped in the rich plains of Culm and Töplitz, and hearing the joyous sound of the *feux-de-joie* which announced the universal transports of the allied troops at the victory of Dennewitz.

98. No sooner was Napoleon informed that the Allies were again threatening St Cyr, and of the check experienced by Dumonceau, than he hastened, at the head of a powerful body of his Guards and cuirassiers, to the frontier. Suddenly approaching Peterswalde, he fell unexpectedly with superior forces on a considerable body of the enemy's horse, which was defeated, and Colonel Blucher, son of the marshal, after a gallant resistance, made prisoner. On this occasion the Emperor altered his line of attack: it was against the enemy's right, and ascending the course of the Elbe, that his columns were directed; in consequence, he found the roads everywhere passable, and the enemy were without difficulty thrown back into the Bohemian plain. There, however, they stood firm, and took a position in the level, ready to give battle. The opportunity of striking a blow with advantage had been lost: great part of the allied army were now assembled, above seventy thousand strong, in the plain at the foot of the mountains. Ziethen, with their advanced guard, occupied a wood at the base of the hill, Wittgenstein was in Culm, Colloredo on the heights of Striesewitz in its neighbourhood, and Kleist at Siberschen: the Russian and Prussian Guards were in reserve between Culm and Töplitz.

99. Everything seemed to presage a decisive battle, and the soldiers in both armies expected it. Nevertheless, the crisis passed over with nothing more than some sharp affairs of advanced guards. In truth, the generals on both sides were desirous to avoid such an extremity: it was obviously for the interest of the Allies to postpone any general engagement till the arrival of Benningsen's reserve had added sixty thousand fresh troops to their arms; and Napoleon was desirous not to de-

scend with the bulk of his forces into the Bohemian plain, both because retreat back again over the mountains, in case of disaster, was difficult, and because he still thought that it was on the side of Berlin or Silesia that the decisive blow was to be struck, or that some unguarded movement on the side of the allied generals would soon enable him to deliver it with advantage. He had no fixed plan, but was on the lookout for his opportunity, and he saw clearly it was not to be found on the side of Bohemia.* Meanwhile Austria, encouraged by the great successes which had in so many quarters attended the allied arms, signed, on the 9th September, two important treaties with Russia and Prussia. By this treaty it was provided that Austria should be reconstructed as nearly as possible as she stood in 1805, the Confederation of the Rhine dissolved, and the independence of the intermediate states between the Inn and the Rhine established. Each of the three powers was to keep 150,000 men in the field, and to augment that number if it became necessary; and they engaged not to enter into any separate treaty with France. By the secret articles, the 32d military division of the French empire was to be dissolved, the French princes in Germany dispossessed, and these stipulations communicated only to Prussia.

100. Napoleon, however, desirous not to depart for Dresden without having accomplished something worthy of his renown, and which might check the Allies from renewing their incursions during his absence, ordered, on the afternoon of the 17th, a partial descent into the plain, and attack on the enemy's position. Ziethen, who held the post at the foot of the descent, was dislodged, and driven back towards Culm by Mouton Duvernet,

* "Yesterday I made a reconnaissance to ascertain the force and position of the enemy; and although the debouch of Peterswalde was favourable for artillery, the declivities being gentle, the position of the enemy did not permit me to attack him. I have resolved, therefore, to hold to the system of go and come, and to await my opportunity."—
NAPOLÉON TO ST CYR, 18th September 1813. ST CYR, iv. 421.

and Arbesau was carried. Napoleon himself, encouraged by the success of his advanced guard, descended to Dodnitz, at the foot of the declivity, where he eagerly reconnoitred the position and strength of the enemy. An obscure haze concealed the greater part of the hostile columns; even the chapel of Culm could not be discerned through the mist; when suddenly a terrible cannonade, loudly re-echoed from the neighbouring mountains, burst forth on the right and left: numerous batteries, placed on the heights on either side, concealed by the woods and fog, sent a storm of bullets down on the advancing columns; while the Russians in front, resuming the offensive, with loud shouts returned to the charge. Napoleon quickly retired to the heights, but the column which had advanced into the plain did not escape without very serious loss. Coloredo turned their left, and regained Arbesau at the point of the bayonet; Meerfeldt, on the right, moved direct from Ausseig on Nollendorf, so as to threaten their retreat, while Wittgenstein and Ziethen fiercely assailed their rear. A thick fog, which prematurely brought on the darkness of night, alone saved the whole division, which had descended into the plain, from total destruction; but as it was, they only regained the mountains with the loss of an eagle, three guns, and twelve hundred prisoners, besides an equal number killed and wounded.

101. Convinced by the view he had now obtained of the positions and strength of the enemy, that nothing was to be made of an attack on the side of Bohemia, and conceiving that the Allies were so situated and scattered that they could not make any formidable attack on the French position on the mountains, at least for some days,* Napoleon returned to

Pirna, and from thence to Dresden. After a few hours' rest there, he continued his march with his Guards and cuirassiers across the Elbe, to check the incursions of Blucher, who, taking advantage of the Emperor's absence, was now driving Macdonald before him, and had already occupied Bautzen and extended himself along the line of the Spree. Napoleon arrived in front of the enemy, whose advanced posts were in the wood of Hartau. He immediately mounted on horseback, and a skirmish ensued, in the course of which the village of Goldbach became the prey of the flames. That night the Emperor slept at a miserable hamlet near Hartau, with only a part of his Guards around him; the remainder, unable to bear up against the incessant fatigue of so many marches and countermarches which led to nothing, had fallen behind.

102. The utmost melancholy prevailed at his headquarters. The campaign seemed endless; the troops, worn out by dreadful fatigue and the severest privations, had lost much of their former spirit. Toils, sickness, and the sword of the enemy, had in an extraordinary degree thinned their ranks; and the generals could not conceal from themselves that the French army, daily hemmed in within a more contracted circle, and diminishing in numbers, was no longer able to resume the offensive with a prospect of success at any point. On the following day the Emperor seemed, what was most unusual to him, a prey to indecision. Blucher's army was drawn up in order of battle, but he did not venture to attack him; and after remaining under arms for the whole forenoon, he galloped at ten in the evening towards Neustadt, where a body of Austrians and Russians, under General Neipperg, was engaged in a skirmish with Lauriston, previous to their retiring into Bohemia. Next day, feeling himself too weak to resume the offensive in any direction, he returned to Dresden; and, being sensible of the necessity of contracting his circle of operations, withdrew Macdonald's

* On the morning of the 18th, when the mist had cleared away, Napoleon ascended an eminence, and for long gazed through his telescope at the columns of the enemy. "All that I can see," said he to Berthier, "forms perhaps two corps of 60,000 men: they will require more than one day before they can unite and attack. Let us return to Pirna."—*FAIN*, ii. 334.

army to Weissig, within two leagues of that capital, thereby in effect abandoning the whole right bank of the Elbe to the Allies. On the morning of that day there was a dreadful storm, accompanied with loud peals of thunder: an unusual circumstance so late in the season, and when the chill of winter was already felt; which, combined with the state of the Emperor's fortunes, was deemed by many ominous of his fall.

103. While these indecisive but important operations were going on in Saxony and on the Bohemian frontier, a serious partisan warfare had sprung up in the rear of the French army towards Leipzig and Westphalia. Secure in their mountain stronghold of Bohemia, the allied sovereigns wisely resolved to take advantage of their great superiority in light horse, to threaten the French communications, and seize their convoys on the roads to the Rhine. With this view, Schwartzberg advanced Klenau's corps to Freiburg, where he made four hundred prisoners; from whence Thielman, with three thousand horse, was detached to scour the country towards Leipzig; while Mensdorf, with two thousand, beset the road from Dresden and Torgau towards that city. Thielman at first had considerable success. He attacked and destroyed, near Weissenfels, a large convoy of ammunition destined for the use of the Grand Army; made prisoners five hundred men in Merseburg, and spread alarm through the whole of western Saxony. Lefebvre Desnouettes, however, now took the field with eight thousand *chasseurs à cheval* and cavalry of the Guard, and, coming up with the Saxon partisan near Merseburg, defeated him with considerable loss, and obliged him to retire towards Zwickau, after abandoning his prisoners. This check, however, had no other effect than that of calling forth Platoff, who issued from Bohemia with seven thousand Cossacks and Austrian horse, two days after, and directing his march to Altenburg, where Lefebvre Desnouettes lay, wholly unconscious of the impending danger, attacked him

with such vigour that he was quickly driven back to Zeitz. The French general, however, was effecting his retreat by echelon in good order, while still pressed by Platoff in rear, when he was attacked by Thielman, who had rallied after his check, and totally defeated with the loss of five guns and fifteen hundred prisoners; a blow the more sensibly felt, that it fell on some of the best corps of cavalry in the French army.

104. Operations of a still more important character were undertaken at the same period by the army of the Prince-Royal in the north of Germany. Slowly advancing after his important victory at Dennewitz, Bernadotte at length moved his headquarters, a week after the battle, to Koswig, in the direction of the Elbe, and on the 15th he had got as far as Zerbst, while his vanguard was at Dessau on the Elbe. Bulow, meanwhile, laid siege to Wittenberg. The operations were pushed forward with great vigour, and on the 24th the suburbs were carried; under cover of a heavy bombardment, which set the town on fire in many different places, the second parallel was opened; and everything announced that, if not relieved, it could not hold out for any considerable time. Ney, who commanded now only two corps, not numbering above fifty thousand combatants, (Oudinot's corps having been dissolved, and its remains incorporated with the two others after the disaster of Dennewitz), was in no condition to raise the siege; and a movement which he made from Torgau, to clear the left bank of the Elbe of some of the allied parties who had begun to infest it, had no other effect but to make them withdraw within the *tête-de-pont* at Dessau, which he did not feel himself in sufficient strength to attack.

105. Meanwhile Chernicheff, with more than his wonted boldness and address, carried the partisan warfare with the most signal success into the heart of Westphalia. Detached with three thousand horse from the army of the north, this indefatigable leader crossed the Elbe at Dessau, and, pushing with great celerity across Ger-

many, reached Cassel, the capital of the kingdom of Westphalia, in the end of September. Jerome, with the few troops which the necessities of the Emperor had left him for the defence of his capital, made a precipitate retreat without firing a shot; and Chernicheff immediately made his entry into the city at the head of his Cossacks, amidst the vociferous applause of the people, and proclaimed the dissolution of the kingdom of Westphalia. Symptoms of insurrection against the French authorities were immediately manifested; the students flocked in hundreds to be enrolled in battalions of volunteers; crowds assembled in the streets loudly demanding arms, and the flame rapidly spread into all the villages in the neighbourhood. But the Russian commander, being destitute of infantry and artillery, was unable to maintain the advanced position which he had gained; and, after remaining in the capital a week, he was obliged, by the approach of a considerable body of French troops, to evacuate it and retire across the Elbe. He regained the right bank of that river, however, as he had effected his advance, without losing a man, taking with him in triumph the stores of the arsenal, the royal horses and carriages, and an immense store of booty beneath the saddles of his Cossacks. But the moral effect of this blow far exceeded these predatory gains. The brother of Napoleon had been compelled to flee from his capital; his dethronement pronounced and all but effected, by a foreign partisan; and a dangerous example had thus been given to the world of the facility with which these oppressive foreign thrones, destitute of all support in the interests or affections of the people, might be swept from the earth, the moment the military power which upheld them was overturned. The effect, accordingly, of this stroke was soon felt through the whole north of Germany: already a Saxon battalion had come over from the camp of Marshal Ney to that of the Prince-Royal; the remainder was only prevented by their

personal regard for their sovereign, and the energetic appeals which he made to their military honour, from following the example; and more than one Westphalian battalion, after the surrender of Cassel, took the first opportunity of passing over from their fugitive monarch to the ranks of German freedom.

106. Operations also of minor importance, but still of great local interest, had, during the same period, taken place on the Lower Elbe. The forces there were very nearly matched: Davoust having above thirty-five thousand men under his command at Hamburg, besides twelve thousand Danes, and Walmoden thirty-five thousand on the outside of its walls. Neither party, for some time after hostilities were resumed, made any considerable movements; but at length the French marshal issued forth on the right bank of the Elbe, and moved towards Berlin. Lauenburg was early attacked by a battalion of French infantry, and the partisan corps of Jutzon expelled. Walmoden, whose forces were injudiciously scattered, had not troops adequate at any one point to restrain the enemy; and the consequence was that he was compelled to fall back towards Grabow, leaving his right wing, composed of Swedes under Vegeack, seriously endangered. Davoust's instructions, however, were to await the result of Oudinot's advance at that period to Berlin; and he remained, therefore, inactive at Schwerin, till the defeat of Gross Beeren having rendered the projected combined movement against the Prussian capital impossible, he made the best of his way back to the Elbe. In doing so, the Danes under his command separated from the French, the former retiring to Lübeck, and the latter to the lines in front of Hamburg.

107. Though this sortie of the French from Hamburg was attended with no material results, and, by leading to the dislocation of the French and Danish forces, was rather hurtful than beneficial to their cause, yet it opened the eyes of the allied generals to the

necessity of strengthening the force which observed the enemy's operations in that quarter. With this view twenty thousand of the landwehr of Mecklenburg and Swedish Pomerania were called out, who did good service, by rendering disposable a much larger portion of Walmoden's regular forces than he had hitherto been able to bring into the field. The beneficial effects of this arrangement were soon conspicuous. One of his light squadrons, which scoured the left bank of the Elbe, having intercepted a despatch from the French marshal to the governor of Magdeburg, in which he announced his intention of despatching the division Pécheux from Hamburg to reinforce the garrison of that fortress, which was threatened with a siege after the rout of Dennewitz, the Prussian general immediately took measures to intercept and destroy that force. For this purpose, leaving Vege-sack, with the Swedes and landwehr of Mecklenburg, in the environs of Schwerin to observe Davoust, he himself set out with the flower of his army, sixteen thousand strong, for Dörmitz, where, with surprising celerity, he threw a bridge of boats across the Elbe, and, having crossed the river, came up with Pécheux, who had six thousand men and eight pieces of cannon, at the village of Görda, near Dannenberg. There the French were speedily assailed by forces twice as numerous as their own, and totally defeated. The general and eighteen hundred men were made prisoners; the whole guns and caissons taken, and twelve hundred killed and wounded; while the Allies lost only eight hundred men. Having gained this brilliant success, Walmoden instantly recrossed the Elbe to oppose Davoust, who was greatly superior to the forces left to observe him; and with such secrecy and skill were the operations conducted, that he was back, like the Consul Nero in the war with Hannibal, before the enemy were aware of his absence.

108. Matters had now arrived at such a pass with Napoleon, that a change of position, and an alteration of his line

of action, had become indispensable. With equal judgment and ability, he had taken every possible advantage of the fortified line of the Elbe; and by means of the skilful use of his bridges over that river, and his interior line of communications, he had long, with inferior forces, maintained his ground in the heart of Germany. By so doing, he had preserved his ascendancy over the states of the Rhenish confederacy longer than in any other way could have been practicable, and kept at bay forces of the Allies, by which, under any other system of operations, he would in all probability ere this have been crushed. But the time had now arrived when this defensive system could no longer be maintained. Rich as the agricultural productions of Saxony are, they were by this time entirely consumed by the enormous multitudes of men and horses who had so long been quartered on its territory; and the contracted circle within which, on all sides, the French armies now stood, rendered it totally impossible for any further subsistence to be extracted from the soil; while the increasing audacity and strength of the allied cavalry made any supplies from the rear to the last degree precarious.

109. Not only had all the towns and villages around Dresden been long ago exhausted by the triple scourge of quartering, pillage, and contributions, but the forage was everywhere totally consumed, the stack-yards emptied, the houses burnt or in ruins; while the fields of potatoes in the rural districts, in some cases ten times turned over in search of food, told to what shifts the countless swarms of troops of all nations, by whom they had been trodden, had been reduced.* On the small town of Pirna, already reduced to despair by previous exactions, the crush-

* "Not a vestige of forage was to be got for the horses. The frontier villages were all in ruins. All the houses not built of stone were torn to pieces for the fires of the bivouacs. All the environs bore the impress of the ravages of war. The earth in the fields, which had been ten times turned over, was again carefully searched for the few potatoes which might have escaped the eye of former plunder."—*Témoin Oculaire*, in *OEDERBEN*, ii. 278.

ing burden of six thousand rations a-day was imposed in the end of September; while, such were the necessities or cupidity of the soldiers, when quartered in the villages between it and Dresden, that not only were the wooden crosses erected by the piety of former ages over the places of interment torn up and burnt for firewood, but the graves themselves were opened; the coffins were broken and dragged up, the bones and corpses scattered about, the very shrouds and dead-clothes they contained, with the garlands of flowers found on once-loved hearts, seized by avaricious hands, and sold to the miscreants who followed the army to profit by its excesses.

110. Deplorable as was the condition of the troops in the environs of Dresden, from the total ruin of the country, and the excessive privations to which they were exposed, their lot was enviable compared to that of a great part of the soldiers who were accumulated in the towns. The latter had warmth and lodging, indeed, but they were often dearly purchased amidst the accumulated horrors of famine, contagion, and mortality. The immense number of wounded who had been brought into the hospitals of that city since the campaign recommenced, had not only filled all the public establishments, but a great number of private houses, with the sick and the maimed; and although death had fearfully thinned their ranks, often at the rate of two hundred a-day, yet fifteen thousand were still heaped together in such a state of misery as to engender the never-failing accompaniment of human woe, a typhus fever of the most malignant kind. In this state of wretchedness they were when the general retreat of the army from Silesia and the Bohemian frontier, in the end of September, suddenly filled the city with thirty thousand fresh troops, besides twice as many quartered in the environs, upwards of two-thirds of whom were in a state of the most deplorable destitution. The accumulation of men and horses in a narrow space, and consequent spread of contagion, were then prodigiously aug-

mented. In vain the most severe orders were issued by the Emperor—one in particular, that every tenth marauder should be shot—to arrest the progress of disbanding and wandering on the part of the troops; the necessities of their situation, the confusion which prevailed, the thirst for gain and enjoyment, with the continual prospect of death before their eyes, rendered the men utterly indifferent to all such precautions.* The distribution of rations of meat had become rare, those of bread were reduced a half; and nearly the whole army, with the exception of the Guards, were compelled to forage individually for their own subsistence. This system, which did admirably well as long as the French armies were continually advancing in the career of victory, to hitherto untouched fields of plunder, told against them with crushing but well-deserved severity, now that they were thrown back by defeat upon the exhausted theatre of former devastation. It was the counterpart of the compulsory retreat by the wasted line of the Smolensko road.

111. Often a hundred men were crowded together in huts intended only for a single family, and that of the humblest rank; men and horses, soldiers and marauders, camp-followers and prostitutes, were shut up together, half famished, and eagerly snatching from each other the plunder which they had wrenched from the miserable inhabitants. Even the hospitals of the insane had been seized on for lodging, and the lunatics turned out without the slightest means of subsistence, in pursuance of Napoleon's inhuman or-

* "The recent movements of the Grand Army had entirely exhausted the last resources of the country; and the soldier, having no longer the excitement of combat to distract his misery, felt it the more keenly. To all verbal complaints on this head, the answer always was, 'Cause the commissary to be shot, and you will want for nothing.' To the written reclamations an invitation was given to apply for orders or decorations, these being more easy to supply than bread. At this moment, the Emperor sent a decree by which the town of Pirna, at that moment at the lowest point of misery itself, should furnish us with six thousand rations of bread a-day."—*St Cyr*, iv. 178.

der, "to turn out the mad."* The wonted spirit of the soldiers was entirely broken by the sombre aspect and protracted fatigues of the campaign, and, above all, by the exhausting marches and countermarches which came to no result. Their discontent broke out in open murmurs, and their despondency exhaled in bitter and graphic terms in their correspondence with their relations in France, great part of which was taken by the partisan corps in the rear, and fell into the hands of the Allies.† It may be conceived how the bonds of discipline were relaxed, how the progress of contagion was accelerated, among multitudes thus cooped up together, under circumstances of such physical privation and mental depression. The diminution experienced in the effective force of the French army from these causes, was far greater than that occasioned by capture, or the sword of the enemy. From official documents it appears, that the total number of military inmates who were quartered on the inhabitants of Dresden and its suburbs, from the 15th June to the 15th November in this year, amounted to the enormous, and, if not proved by authentic evidence, incredible number of 5,062,871 persons, ‡ a result which can only be explained by recollecting how frequently armies of a hundred

thousand men, with their followers, passed through its gates during that disastrous period. And, from equally certain evidence, it is proved that the military force at the disposal of Napoleon, which, on the termination of the armistice, amounted to nearly three hundred and sixty thousand men present with the eagles, had, by the end of September, a period of only six weeks, sunk down to less than two hundred thousand combatants.§

112. On the other hand, the condition of the Allies, since the struggle commenced, had sensibly ameliorated. They had lost, indeed, by sickness, prisoners, and the sword, above eighty thousand men since hostilities were renewed; but this number, great as it was, would be nearly replaced by Benningsen's army, which was now advancing by rapid strides across Silesia, and which crossed the Elbe on the 25th, and reached Töplitz in the beginning of October. Their troops were incomparably more healthy than the French. With the exception of the advance to Dresden in the end of August, when the fatigue had been excessive, the soldiers had not been exposed to any considerable hardships. Comfortably hutted or lodged in Bohemia, the grand allied army was able, by the advance of a few corps to a short distance on the frontier, to put the flower of the French troops in motion, and bring back Napoleon's Guards, in breathless haste, from the extremity of Silesia to the summit of the Erzgebirge. Their wants, purveyed for by the wealth of England in the immense circle of Germany in their rear, were amply supplied: rations were regularly served out to the men; and the necessity of providing for their own necessities, so fatal to military discipline and subordination, was almost unknown. The enthusiastic spirit and signal success of the troops preserved them from mental depression; the sick and wounded were attended to in the rear, where contagion was not fostered

* "For several months there had been at Sonnenstein, near Pirna, an asylum for the insane. On the 14th September it was suddenly evacuated, and converted into a fortress. The only answer the director of the establishment was able to obtain from the chief was, 'Let the madmen be turned out.' The major charged with taking possession of the house rendered this act of violence still more cruel by the severity of his measures."—ODELEBEN, *Témoin Oculaire*, ii. 200.

† The following are a few of the extracts:—"Two years in succession of such torments exceed the limits of human strength." Another,—"I am worn out with this life; continually exposed to fatigue and danger, without any appearance of a termination." A third,—"Louis is there, wounded, and a prisoner: this, then, is the end of military honours; this is the issue of our prosperity." A fourth,—"Such a one has been killed: if this continue, every one will be killed: such as survive one campaign will be cut down in the next."—FAIN, *il.* 374, 875.

‡ See Appendix A, Chap. LXXX.; and ODELEBEN, *Témoin Oculaire*, 237.

§ See Appendix B, Chap. LXXX.; and LORD BURGHESH'S *War in Germany*, 316, App. No. 2.

by multitudes, and the kindly feelings of the peasantry alleviated the evils they had undergone: while the universal exhilaration and spirit which prevailed, served as a balm to the wounds of those who had been injured, and sent them back in an incredibly short time to the ranks of war.

CHAPTER. LXXXI.

BATTLES OF LEIPSIK.

1. IF the military position of the two parties were alone considered, it would be hard to say in favour of which, at this period, the scales of fortune were likely to preponderate. The French, it is true, had lost a hundred and sixty thousand men since the termination of the armistice; they had been defeated in three pitched battles; and their troops, severely straitened in their quarters, had suffered grievously from privation and famine. But still their line of defence was unbroken. Six weeks' fighting, on a scale of unprecedented magnitude, had not driven them from their stronghold in the centre of Germany; and of all the great fortresses which they held on the Elbe, not one had been wrested from their arms. Napoleon in person had never ceased to be victorious: a triumph worthy of being placed beside Austerlitz and Friedland had already graced his arms; the ample circle of his enemies never ventured to withstand the shock of his cuirassiers; and the losses of the Allies, though not so great as his own, had yet been so considerable as to reduce them for some weeks to a defensive system. Above all, he held a central position, and ruled with undivided and despotic authority; whereas they acted on an immense circumference, and were directed by independent cabinets and generals of different nations, whose mutual jealousies had already well-nigh broken up the alliance, and who could not be expected to work

together if a disaster similar to that of Dresden should again befall their arms. So strongly did these advantageous circumstances impress the Emperor's mind, and such was the confidence which he still had in his star, that he wrote, at the moment of leaving Dresden to engage the Allies at Leipsic, that he was about to gain a glorious victory.*

2. So many chances did these circumstances afford in favour of the French Emperor, that, if this had been an ordinary war, it is more than probable that he would have extricated himself from all his difficulties; and that another victory would, as at Wagram or Friedland, have reinstated his affairs, and again prostrated the whole continental states. His situation after Eylau or Aspern was seemingly more hopeless than now on the Elbe: and his prospects were then more unfavourable; for the family connection with Austria rendered it more than probable, that means might be found, by concessions, or facilities procured by disaster, to detach that power altogether from the alliance. But this

* "The Emperor is about to give battle. Dresden will be occupied by thirty thousand men. If his Majesty lose the battle, he will cause the place to be evacuated; but *as his Majesty will gain the battle*, Dresden will always remain his centre of operations. As in a hundred chances his Majesty believes he has eighty in his favour, we must act as if he were certain of success."—*Note dictated by the Emperor to Count DARU, Oct. 7, 1813; Eugénie*, xii. 341, 342.

was not an ordinary war, and a spirit was now abroad upon the earth which overruled the decisions of cabinets, and mastered the movements of generals. The unbounded enthusiasm and the profound exasperation of Germany formed an element of unexampled importance in the strife, and, like a mighty stream, swept all lesser obstacles before it. Governments could not restrain their people: willing or unwilling, they were compelled to join in the crusade for the deliverance of the Fatherland. This generous and noble spirit had penetrated into the recesses of courts, and subdued all selfish feelings—alike in the leaders of armies and the rulers of nations. It was felt equally in the cabinet and the cottage; it stilled the jealousies of sovereigns, and animated the courage of armies. This it was which held in indissoluble bonds the discordant elements of the Grand Alliance; this it was which filled all the chasms in their ranks by gallant multitudes pressing forward to the strife. Nor were material resources wanting; for the last reserve of Russia, nearly sixty thousand strong,* under Benningsen, was approaching, and to it Napoleon had no corresponding force to oppose; every sabre and bayonet at his disposal was already on the Elbe.

3. The arrival of this great force at Tüplitz, on the 1st October, where it was reviewed, and found to be in a very efficient state, with the addition of eight thousand Prussians to Kleist's corps, raised the Russian and Prussian armies in Bohemia, after all their losses, to eighty thousand effective men in the field, exclusive of the Austrians, who were fully seventy thousand. This was the signal for the recommencement of great operations. The allied sovereigns were at first inclined to have gone into Schwartzberg's plan, which was to have called Blücher's army, as well as that of Benningsen, into Bohemia, and acted by one line, by Komotau and Chemnitz, on Leipsic, so as to inter-

cept altogether the communications of the French army, and compel them to fight their way through two hundred and thirty thousand men back to the Rhine. But this would have left on Bernadotte's hands a force which he could not attempt to resist, if the enemy chose to cross the Elbe with all his forces, and carry the war into the hitherto untouched fields of Prussia, whereby Berlin would inevitably be taken. In addition to this, difficulties almost insuperable were experienced when the proposal was mooted to place Blücher and the Silesian army under the immediate direction of the Austrian commander-in-chief. They had hitherto done very well at a distance, and when each obeyed the commands of his respective sovereign; but it was very doubtful whether this harmony would continue if they were brought into immediate and personal collision. Little cordial co-operation could be expected from the hussar-like energy of the Prussian veteran and the methodical circumspection of the Austrian commander; and Blücher himself, whose opinion, age, and great services were entitled to respect, had expressed his disinclination to any such arrangement. It was, therefore, resolved to descend with the grand army of Bohemia and Benningsen's corps alone into the plains of Leipsic; and to unite Blücher's army to that of the Prince-Royal, which would form a mass of a hundred and fifty thousand men, capable, it was hoped, either of arresting any advance of the enemy in the direction of Berlin, or of co-operating in a general and decisive attack on his forces in the Saxon plains.

4. The different corps of the Allies forthwith received orders in conformity to these views. Blücher, as usual, was the first in motion. Leaving the division of Prince Czorbatoff at Bautzen to cover Lusatia from the incursions of the garrison of Dresden, he marched with the remainder of his forces, about sixty-five thousand strong, towards the Elbe, and reached Elsterwerda, while the French corps there crossed at Meissen. To deceive the enemy, he caused Sacken's advanced

* 57,329 men, of whom 12,886 were cavalry and Cossacks, and 198 guns.—*FLORIO; BEILAGE*, vii. 63, 69.

guard to attack the *île-de-pont* at that place; and, while their attention was forcibly drawn to that point, he himself marched rapidly by Herzberg and Jessen, and on the night of the 2d October reached the Elbe, at the mouth of the Schwarze Elster. Bridges were thrown across with incredible expedition, and the operation was conducted with the most signal ability. Such was the activity of all concerned in it, and the admirable arrangements made for its completion, that by six next morning half the army was across without experiencing the slightest opposition. Bertrand's corps, however, mustering eighteen thousand combatants, was strongly intrenched at Wartenburg, at a short distance from the river, and Blücher could not advance without forcing this position. He commenced the attack, accordingly, at eight o'clock with the troops which had effected the passage; and after six hours' hard fighting, drove the enemy from their position, with the loss of six hundred prisoners and an equal number killed and wounded, though the loss of the Prussians, who were alone engaged, was hardly less considerable. On the following day, the remainder of the army effected its passage without opposition, and Blücher, moving forward, established his headquarters at Düben.

5. At the same time the Prince-Royal of Sweden crossed the Elbe without any resistance, the Russians at Ackow, the Swedes at Roslau, where headquarters were immediately established. His advanced posts were pushed forward, so as to enter into communication with Blücher from Düben; and on the day following, Bulow and Tauenzien were also crossed over, leaving Thumen only, with fourteen thousand men, to continue the siege or blockade of Wittenberg. Ney, whose army was so reduced that he had under his immediate command only Reynier's corps, now not more than twelve thousand strong, was in no condition to make head against forces so considerable: he therefore evacuated Dessau, and retreated by Bitterfeld towards Leipsic, summon-

ing Bertrand to join his standard. At the same time the grand allied army began to defile by its left through the mountains, to penetrate into Saxony by the route of Sebastiansberg and Chemnitz. Colloredo remained at Töplitz to guard the magazines there, and Benningsen continued in the same place, but for a few days only, to rest his soldiers after their long march across Germany. The reserve of that army, under Prince Labanoff, which had now entirely come up, presented striking marks of the prodigious efforts which Russia had made to recruit her forces. A great number of Tartars and Bashkirs were to be found in its ranks, who had come from the Lake Baikal and the frontiers of China, and some of whom were armed with their primitive weapons of bows and arrows. On the 3d October, the advanced guard, under Klenau, reached Chemnitz, where it was attacked, at first with success, by Prince Poniatowski at the head of his gallant Poles. But the indefatigable Platoff appeared on the flank of the victors as they were pursuing their advantages, and compelled them to make a precipitate retreat to Mitweyda. Next day headquarters were advanced to Marienberg; a hundred thousand men had already entered the Saxon plains from Bohemia, while a hundred and thirty thousand had crossed the Elbe, under Blücher and Bernadotte, to encircle the French Emperor.

6. While the vast armies of the Allies, acting upon an immense circle, and directed by consummate judgment, were thus drawing round the French army, and preparing to crush it in the position it had so long maintained on the banks of the Elbe, Napoleon, for the first time in his life, remained without any fixed plan, and watching merely the course of events to select his point of attack. When he had regained Dresden, after his last abortive expedition against Blücher, he said, "I will not go out again; I will wait." In effect, he rested on his oars for ten days, constantly expecting his enemies to commit some fault which would give him an opportunity of striking with effect. He summoned

up Augereau with his newly-raised corps, about fifteen thousand strong, to Leipsic from Mayence, though it had barely completed its military formation. At length, however, the losses sustained by the partisan warfare in his rear, and the frightful progress of famine and disease in Dresden, Torgau, and the other fortresses on the Elbe, rendered it indispensable for the French army to move. The Emperor had no alternative but to do so, or see his forces melt away and sink to the last stage of weakness before his eyes without firing a shot. The rapid march of Blücher to the Elbe; the passage of that river by Bernadotte at Roslau; the movements of the grand army towards Komotau and Chemnitz—all indicated a determination on the part of the Allies to hem him in on every side, and possibly renew on the banks of the Elbe the catastrophe of the Beresina. Napoleon felt his danger; and, calling St Cyr to his cabinet at midnight on the 6th October, he thus expressed himself upon the prospects of the campaign.

7. "I am going to leave Dresden," said he, "and I shall take Vandamme's and your own corps with me. I am certainly about to engage in a decisive battle; if I gain it, I shall regret not having had my whole forces at my disposal to profit by it; if, on the other hand, I experience a reverse, you will be of no use to me in the battle; and, shut up here, you will be lost without resource. Besides, what is Dresden now to me? It can no longer be considered as the pivot of the army, which is unable to find subsistence in the exhausted country which surrounds it. As little can it be considered as a great depot; for there remain in it only provisions for a few days: almost all the stores of ammunition are exhausted, and what little remains may be distributed among the soldiers. There are at Dresden twelve thousand sick and wounded; but they will almost all die, being the remains of sixty thousand who have entered the hospitals since the opening of the campaign. When winter sets in, the Elbe no longer affords a position: being frozen, it can

be passed at every point. I am about to take up another position, which is defensible at every point. I shall throw back my right as far as Erfurth, support my left by Magdeburg, and my centre by the heights forming the left bank of the Saale, which form a material bulwark, at all times capable of arresting an enemy. Magdeburg will become to me another Dresden: it is a noble fortress, which can be left as long as necessary to its own resources, without the risk of seeing it carried, as Dresden might have been during the three days that the Allies were before its suburbs, if they had been commanded by a man of capacity. Dresden can never be made a strong place, without destroying the vast suburbs which at present constitute the chief part of that beautiful capital. In addition to this, it would require to be re-stored with ammunition and provisions, and it is now impossible to introduce them. In fine, I wish to change my position. Dresden is too near Bohemia; no sooner have I left it, even upon the shortest expedition, than the enemy are before its walls; and I have not the means of preventing that by threatening their rear. By the more distant position which I propose to take, I will be in a situation to direct great strokes against them, and force them to a durable peace." St Cyr expressed his entire concurrence in these lucid and masterly opinions; and he was dismissed with the assurance that next morning he would receive the requisite formal order for the destruction of the blockhouses, palisades, and exterior fortifications of Dresden, and the evacuation of its stores upon Magdeburg.

8. Early next morning Napoleon set out from Dresden, and had a conference with Murat at Meissen. But instead of then following out the plan he had formed, and transmitting the instructions he had promised to St Cyr, for the evacuation of the capital, he totally altered his views, transmitted orders to that general to hold it to the last extremity, and placed under his orders his own and the remains of Vandamme's corps, about thirty thou-

sand sabres and bayonets, besides twelve thousand sick and wounded, who encumbered the hospitals. With the bulk of his forces the Emperor marched to the northward, with the intention of joining the army of Ney in the vicinity of Torgau, and resuming his favourite project of an attack on Berlin; not without the hope that he would succeed, with his army in a central position between Bernadotte and Blücher, in separating the one of these commanders from the other, and beating them both in succession. To cover his communications, and keep in check the grand allied army, which was now fast issuing from Bohemia towards Leipsic, by Marienberg and Chemnitz, he detached Murat, with fifty thousand men, composed of the corps of Victor, Lauriston, and Poniatowski, to Freyberg, with instructions to retard the advance of the enemy as long as possible, and when he could no longer keep his ground, to retire towards Leipsic and the Upper Mulde.* The Imperial Guard and cavalry, with Macdonald's and Marmont's corps, followed the standards of the Emperor, and, joined to the corps of Oudinot, Bertrand, and Reynier, under Ney, formed a mass of a hundred and twenty-five thousand men, with which he proposed to strike the redoubtable blows which he meditated in the direction of Berlin. The King of Saxony, with his family and court, left Dresden

in the suite of the Emperor. It was a mournful sight when the long train of carriages, amidst the tears of the inhabitants, defiled through the streets, and the sovereign, leaving his beloved capital to the horrors of an inevitable siege, set out a suppliant or a captive in the ranks of war.†

9. The rapid evacuation of the right bank of the Elbe, in pursuance of these orders for the concentration of the army, prevented the execution to the letter of the rigorous orders of Napoleon, which were "to carry off all the cattle, burn the woods, and destroy the fruit-trees." The officers intrusted with the execution of this inhuman order found various excuses for not obeying it, and, in general, had not time to execute instructions which would have reduced a large part of Saxony, where they had been treated with so much hospitality, to a desert wilderness. The rapid approach of the allied armies, who covered the whole right bank of the river, and were already descending from the Bohemian hills by Pirna and Sonnenstein, threw back the numerous swarm of stragglers whom the French had left behind them. Dresden was speedily invested on all sides; and numerous covered boats, laden with crowds of sick and wounded, in the last stage of weakness and contagion, were daily arriving within its walls. Nothing could be more revolting than the conduct of the French military to these miserable wretches, when there was no longer any prospect of their being serviceable in the campaign. A soldier, in the last stage of dysentery, was found lying by the roadside, almost buried in a dunghill, and uttering the most piteous cries. One said in passing, "That is no business of ours;" another, "I have no orders on the subject." An officer came up, and exclaimed—"He is not to be pitied—he is about to die."

* Napoleon's instructions to Murat, which explained his views at this period, were in these terms:—"I have raised the siege of Wittenberg: I have separated the corps of Sacken from that of Langeron and York: Augereau this evening will be at Lützen or Leipsic, and Arrighi has orders to join him, which will bring you a reinforcement of at least 30,000 men. One of two things will happen: either I will attack the enemy tomorrow and beat him, or, if he retires, I will burn the bridges over the Elbe. Then you will do what you can to preserve Leipsic, so as to give me time to beat the army of Silesia; but if you are obliged to quit Leipsic, you should direct your course to the Mulde: the bridges of Düben and Eilenburg are guarded. My intention is to pass over to the right bank of the Elbe, and to manoeuvre between Magdeburg and Dresden, debouching by one of my four places on that river to surprise the enemy."—JOMINI'S *Vie de Napoleon*, iv. 435, 436.

† Napoleon's notes on the position of the French and the Allies, and the different plans which he had entertained for the conduct of the campaign at this critical juncture, are very curious and instructive.—See Appendix C, Chap. LXXXI.; and NORVINA, *Recueil de 1813*, ii. 366.

10. As soon as Napoleon was informed of the passage of the Elbe by the Prince-Royal, he determined to interpose between his army and that of Silesia, and, if possible, crush one or other before any assistance could be obtained. With this view he pushed on at the head of a hundred and twenty-five thousand men. The French army being concentrated, had the fairest prospect of falling on the detached columns of Blücher's army, which were marching across from the Elbe, in the direction of Bernadotte's forces. Langeron and York alone were at the headquarters at Düben, Sacken being between Eilenburg and Torgau. So late was the Prussian general of receiving information of the approach of danger, that it was only by a sudden decision and immediate movement that he extricated himself from his perilous situation. On the 9th he passed the Mulde, and by forced marches joined Bernadotte with all his forces, late on the evening of the 10th, at Zörbig. On the same day Napoleon established his headquarters at Düben, which Blücher had left the morning before. So near was Sacken being cut off, that in following the wake of Blücher towards Düben on the evening of the 9th, he found the town already occupied by the French advanced guard, and only got on by filing to his right, and making a detour by the village of Sokana, where he passed the night.

11. The decisive crisis was now approaching: every moment was precious; the fate of Europe hung in the balance, suspended almost even; a feather would make it incline either way. Both parties adopted equally bold resolutions; and it was hard to say which would be first pierced to the heart in the desperate thrusts that were about to be exchanged. Each army had passed the other, and lay in great strength upon his opponent's communications. Blücher and Bernadotte at Zörbig were between Napoleon and the Rhine, while he at Düben was between them and the Elbe. Both thought that, by threatening their adversary's communications, they would

draw him back or reduce him to the defensive, and both acted on this principle. On the 11th the Prince-Royal and Blücher, leaving Thümen before Wittenberg, and Tauenzein at Dessau, to guard the passage of the Elbe, instead of returning towards the Elbe, marched still further to the south-west, and established themselves at Halle and Rothenburg, directly between Napoleon and the Rhine, and in such a situation that they could open up a communication across the plain of Saxony with the Grand Army descending from Bohemia. Napoleon, on his part, pushed forward Reynier to Wittenberg, and Ney to Dessau, which threatened his adversaries' communications with Berlin. The former, with the aid of the garrison of the besieged fortress, speedily raised the siege of Wittenberg, and drove Thümen, who commanded the blockading force, before him towards Roslau; while Tauenzein, finding himself in no condition to make head against Ney at Dessau, fell back with considerable loss to the same place, and, after breaking down the bridge over the Elbe, continued his retreat by Zerbst, towards Potsdam and Berlin. Napoleon was highly elated with these advantages, and, seeing the road to that capital open before him, entertained more sanguine hopes than ever of carrying the war into the heart of the Prussian territory, rallying to his standard the besieged garrisons on the Oder, and establishing his winter quarters, supported by Torgau, Magdeburg, and Wittenberg, in the hitherto untouched fields of northern Germany.*

12. Although, however, Napoleon did not prosecute his projected movement upon Berlin, and even withdrew Reynier back to Wittenberg, yet his demonstrations against that capital had the effect of withdrawing Berna-

* Napoleon at this period wrote to St Cyr:—"I have raised the siege of Wittenberg: the army of Silesia is in full retreat by the left bank; to-morrow I will compel it to receive battle, or abandon the bridges of Dessau and Wartenberg. I shall then probably pass over to the right bank with all my army; and it is by the right bank I shall return to Dresden."—NAPOLEON to ST CYR, 11th October 1813; JOMINI, iv. 436.

dotte from his true line of operations, and endangering in the last degree the army of Silesia. On the 12th October, he detached himself from Blücher, recrossed the Saale, and moved back towards the Elbe as far as Köthen. The forces under his command, however, as Tauenzien was on the other side of that river, did not exceed fifty thousand combatants, with which he could never have hoped to stop Napoleon at the head of a hundred and twenty thousand; while the separation seriously endangered Blücher, whose communications were now entirely cut off, and who had lost a considerable part of his baggage by the operations of the French light horse on his rear. Bernadotte's true policy would have been to have continued united to Blücher, who had so gallantly made his way to him through many dangers across the Elbe. Their united force, a hundred and thirty thousand strong, might not only have bid defiance to Napoleon, but would have entirely cut him off from the Rhine, and rendered his retreat to France, or even Holland, impossible. But it was already apparent that the royal ex-marshal of France had no disposition to push matters to extremities with France, and that he had secret views of ambition which rendered him unwilling to do anything that might alienate the affections of its inhabitants.

13. Meanwhile, however, the grand allied army was not idle. Issuing from the defiles of the Bohemian mountains, Klenau, on the extreme left, pushed as far as Penig on the 6th, on the direct road to Leipsic, while Wittgenstein on the right reached Altenburg on the same day. At the same time, Murat marched from Freyberg to Odera— a central position at the foot of the high mountains, well calculated at once to maintain his connection with the garrison of Dresden, and keep in check the advancing columns. On the day following, Schwartzberg moved his headquarters, with the bulk of his army, to Chemnitz; and although Murat, Poniatowski, and Victor exerted themselves to the utmost, and the Poles even regained Penig, and drove

back Klenau to a considerable distance, yet the continued approach of the vast masses of the Allies on all the roads turned all the positions which they took up, and compelled them to fall back towards Leipsic. It was impossible that fifty thousand men could maintain themselves against a hundred and twenty thousand. The Austrians, constantly pressing forward, gained ground in every quarter, and on the night of the 9th, their advanced guard, under Prince Maurice of Lichtenstein and Thielman, surprised Wetlau, between Naumburg and Weissenfels, and on the direct road from Leipsic to Mayence. This movement in advance, however, which, by destroying the French communications, would have been of the very highest importance if effected by a large body of the Allies, totally failed in its effect from the insufficiency of the means employed.

14. Augereau, who was hurrying up by forced marches to Leipsic, next morning attacked them with great vigour, and not only cleared the road, but defeated the allied advanced guard with considerable loss. On the 12th, with fifteen thousand men, he entered Leipsic, where a considerable concentration of troops had already taken place. On the allied right, Wittgenstein continued to advance, though not without experiencing considerable resistance, and after several severe combats with Murat's cavalry. The forward movement, however, of the allied right, rendered the King of Naples' position at Odera no longer tenable, and he was obliged to fall back along the course of the Tchoffa to Mitweyda. On all sides the allied forces were approaching Leipsic, and already their advanced posts were within sight of that city. On the same day on which Augereau entered it, Giulay made himself master of Weissenfels, on the road to France from Leipsic, where he captured twelve hundred sick and wounded; and, two days afterwards, Schwartzberg made a reconnaissance with the corps of Klenau and Wittgenstein, which led to a severe action between three thousand of

Murat's horse and Pahlen's dragoons, which, after several gallant charges, terminated in the overthrow of the French by the surpassing valour of sixteen squadrons of Prussian cuirassiers.

15. The Russian cavalry on this occasion were overwhelmed by the great superiority of the enemy, and would have been destroyed had it not been for the brilliant charge of the Prussian cuirassiers, who threw themselves upon the enemy, in the midst of their triumph, with the most determined courage. When Colonel Boutourlin, Alexander's aide-de-camp, expressed to an officer engaged in it the high admiration which he felt at witnessing their gallant bearing, the brave Prussian replied, "Comrade, could we do less! this is the anniversary of the battle of Jena." In the course of this desperate cavalry encounter, six regiments of cuirassiers, fifteen hundred strong in all, which had come up with Augereau, and had recently arrived from Spain, were almost totally destroyed. Murat, who threw himself with his wonted gallantry upon the enemy, was on the point of being made prisoner. When the Prussian cuirassiers broke those of France in the close of the day, he was obliged to flee, closely pursued by the enemy; and an officer who headed the pursuit, almost touching the monarch, repeatedly called out, "Stop, stop, king!" A faithful follower of Joachim passed his sword through the pursuer's body, and so effected the monarch's deliverance; for which he was made an esquire of the king on the spot, and next day received the decoration of the Legion of Honour from Napoleon.

16. While the vast masses of the Allies were thus in all directions converging towards Leipsic, Napoleon remained inactive at Düben, waiting the concentration of his corps to carry into execution the plan which he had so long meditated, of transferring the war to the Prussian territory, and, under the protection of the strong places which he still held on the Elbe and the Oder, maintaining the contest in the space hitherto untouched between

these two rivers.* When he came to propose this bold design, however, to his marshals, he experienced a unanimous and most determined resistance. They were not equally sanguine with the Emperor as to the success of future operations; they had experienced the inability of their troops to contend with the Allies when the animating effect of his presence was no longer felt; and they not unnaturally entertained the greatest dread of plunging, with two hundred and fifty thousand men, into the north of Germany, when four hundred thousand allied troops were prepared to interpose between them and the Rhine, and cut them off entirely from their communications with the French empire.

17. Granting that they would find provisions for a considerable period in the fields of northern Prussia, and shelter from the fortresses of the Elbe and the Oder, of which they still retained possession, how were they to get ammunition and military stores for so vast a host in the plains of Brandenburg, or forage for their cavalry amidst the clouds of light horse by which they would speedily be enveloped? In the desperate strife in which they would be engaged, when each party threw himself upon his enemy's communications, and disregarded his own, was it not probable that two hundred and fifty thousand would be crushed by four hundred thousand, and the party inferior in light horse by the one which had so great a superiority in that formidable arm? Above all, what would the Allies lose by the war being transferred into Prussia but Berlin, and the warlike resources, now nearly exhausted,

* "The plan of the Emperor was to have allowed the Allies to advance into the territory between the Elbe and the Saale, and then, manœuvring under protection of the fortresses and magazines of Dresden, Torgau, Wittenberg, and Hamburg, to have carried the war into the territory between the Elbe and the Oder, on which latter river France still held Glogau, Stettin, and Cüstrin; and, according to circumstances, to have raised the blockade of Dantzic, Zamosc, and Modlin, on the Vistula. Such was the success which might have been expected from that vast plan, that the Coalition would have been disorganised by it."—NAPOLEON in MONTMOLON, II. 125.

of that realm?—they still retained Austria, Silesia, and southern Germany, from which they could derive all their supplies. But if the French were irrevocably cut off from the Rhine, a few weeks' warfare, such as that which had recently occurred, would exhaust all their resources; and the very magnitude of their forces would the sooner paralyse them, from the failure of all the muniments of war.

18. Notwithstanding these obvious considerations, Napoleon was strongly bent upon carrying his bold project into execution; and the four days that he spent at Düben, endeavouring to overcome the repugnance of his marshals, and revolving in his mind the probable risks and advantages of the undertaking, were among the most gloomy and painful of his life. "When the intentions of the Emperor," says Caulaincourt, "to cross the Elbe, and carry the war into Prussia, became known, there was a general explosion of murmurs in the army. 'Are we then,' said they, 'to recommence a levy of bucklers in Prussia, and go and bury the remains of the army at Berlin? Has he not yet slaughtered enough? This will never come to an end. It is too late to adventure on this perilous campaign. Had he replaced us on the Rhine, we should have found winter quarters; and in spring, if necessary, have resumed the offensive. We have had enough of fighting: we must regain France.' I was in the saloon of the Emperor when the staff in a body came to supplicate him to abandon his projects on Berlin, and march on Leipsic. No one who did not witness that deplorable scene, can conceive what he suffered in that moment. The reasons they advanced were futile in the extreme. He remained cold and reserved. 'My plan,' replied he, 'has been deeply calculated: I have admitted into it, as a probable contingency, the defection of Bavaria: I am convinced that the plan of marching on Berlin is good. A retrograde movement, in the circumstances in which we are placed, is a disastrous step; and those who oppose my projects have taken on them a serious responsibility

—I will think on it, gentlemen.' With these words he re-entered his cabinet, and remained the whole remainder of the day wrapped in thought, silent and moody. The weather was sombre and cold: the wind blew with violence, and moaned through the vast corridors of the ancient chateau of Düben, and its old leaden-cased windows trembled in their sockets. Everything in that mournful residence bore the character of profound melancholy." It is interesting to recollect that a similar storm attended the decisive debate in the National Assembly of France on the 17th June 1789, when the sovereignty of the nation was assumed, the monarchy overthrown, and the march of the Revolution rendered inevitable [*ante*, Chap. iv. § 53].

19. In spite of all the obstacles which the marshals threw in his way, it is probable that the Emperor would have ventured on the movement immediately, had not news arrived on the 12th, which rendered it impossible. The cabinet of Munich, which, ever since the war began in Germany, had been besieged with entreaties on the part of its subjects to abandon the Confederation of the Rhine and join the alliance against France, had long continued firm to its engagements, and evented great joy on his triumph at Dresden.* But the victories of Culm, the Katzbach, and Dennewitz renewed its vacillation, and at length the torrent of feeling in Germany became too strong to be resisted. Accordingly, at length, notwithstanding its strong partiality for Napoleon, and natural gratitude for the benefits he had conferred upon Bavaria, it was compelled to yield. A treaty had been signed at Ried, on the 8th October, which had secured the accession of that state to

* "A letter of the Queen of Saxony, sister of the King of Bavaria, written in the enthusiasm of the first moment after the battle of Dresden, breathed the most sincere joy. In it, the words 'our dear Emperor' are several times repeated. The King of Bavaria himself, at first believing that the coalition would be overthrown by this victory, appeared so much the more pleased with it, that he had not had time to compromise himself in the eyes of the Emperor."—*Bignon*, xii. 363, 364, and 427, note.

the Grand Alliance. This important event, which the Emperor had foreseen, as he had been forewarned of it by the King of Bavaria, but which was not equally expected by the army, gave great additional weight to the arguments of the marshals who urged a return to France. "By this inconceivable defection of Bavaria," said they, "the question is entirely changed; we must look forward to the other defections which will follow. Würtemberg, Baden, and Darmstadt will be swept away by the impulse given so violently to the south of Germany. The Austrian army, which was on the Inn, is doubtless already in march for the Rhine. The Bavarian army will follow it. They will draw after them the whole armed force which they find on the road, and then our frontier is at once menaced and invaded. What can be so urgent, then, as to draw near to it? It is always, without doubt, an evil to change a plan; and the peril here is the greater, that we must operate towards the Rhine, when we were prepared to have marched over the Elbe. But is it not better to resign ourselves to this, than to lose everything? Circumstances have changed: we must change with them." The Emperor was not convinced by these reasons, how weighty soever they might appear; but he yielded to the torrent, and gave orders to recall Reynier and Bertrand, who were making ready to march on Berlin; and all was prepared for a retreat to Leipsic.

20. When this resolution was taken, however, matters had proceeded to such extremities, that it was not only impossible to regain the Rhine without a battle, but the losses likely to be incurred, in case of disaster, were frightful. St Cyr was to be left at Dresden with thirty-five thousand men, and Davoust with twenty-five thousand at Hamburg; Magdeburg, Wittenberg, and Torgau, had each its garrison, which would be speedily surrounded; and if the French army were obliged to continue its retreat to the Rhine, it was easy to foresee that the whole fortresses on the Elbe, with ninety thousand men in arms within their walls,

would become the prey of the victor. Magdeburg contained the great magazine of provisions for the army: the grand park of artillery, and reserves of ammunition, which had been stopped at Eilenburg, were hurried into Torgau; while the King of Saxony prepared to follow the fortunes of the Grand Army to Leipsic. In this way, Napoleon set out to fight his way back to the Rhine, through two hundred and fifty thousand enemies, separated both from his magazines and his reserve artillery and ammunition. It must be admitted that a more perilous position could hardly be conceived, and that the system of pushing forward, and making war maintain war, had now been strained to the very uttermost. The Emperor felt his danger; but still trusted to his star. "A thunderbolt," said he afterwards, "alone could have saved us; but nothing was desperate so long as I had the chances of a battle; and in our position a single victory might have restored to us the north as far as Dantzic."

21. With joyful steps the army obeyed the order to face about and march towards the Rhine. Joy beamed in every countenance; the sounds of mirth were heard in every rank: at length their sufferings were come to an end, and they were to revisit their beloved France. The Emperor set out early on the morning of the 15th, and arrived at noon at LEIPSIK, where Marmont and Augereau had some days before united their forces. In approaching the city, which he already foresaw was to be the theatre of a decisive battle, he cast an eager glance over the heights of Pfaffendorf, and the windings of the Partha, which protect on the north the approach to the town. He then rode out to survey the ramparts which encircle the old town and separate it from the suburbs; and, while doing so, the sound of cannon was heard in the direction of Pegau. It was the King of Naples, who, on the position of Magdeburg, arrested the approach of the advanced guard of Schwartzberg's army. Five corps, and a numerous body of cavalry, in all

eighty thousand men, were there assembled under his orders. He had previously intended to conduct the bulk of his army through Leipsic, and join the Emperor to the north of that city, conceiving that it was in that direction that the battle was to be fought; and, under this idea, he had abandoned to the enemy the important defiles at Grobern and Gochrew. But being informed the same day of the resolution of Napoleon to hold the town to the last extremity, he retraced his steps the day following, and took post on the heights of Magdeburg, where the severe cavalry action took place between the French dragons and the Russian and Prussian cuirassiers, which has already been noticed.

22. The old city of Leipsic, which is of no great extent, is surrounded by an irregular rampart, which forms nearly a square. It consists of a dilapidated curtain of masonry, covered by a ditch almost obliterated, without a counterscarp, beyond which broad boulevards, planted with trees, form a spacious and shady walk for the citizens. The suburbs, which stretch, as in most continental cities, beyond this verdant belt, were much more considerable at that period, and they were then, as now, also shut in towards the south and east, by walls, and the gates strengthened by palisades; but towards the north-west, on the side of the Partha, they were altogether open. To the west and south-west, on the road to France, the city is bounded by the marshes of the Elster and the Pleisse, which streams, flowing in a lazy current to the north-west, enclose between them swampy meadows nearly two miles broad, wholly impassable for carriages. Though those rivers are of no great breadth, they are so deep and muddy that they are in most places unfordable either by cavalry or infantry. This broad marsh is crossed only by the road to Lützen and Mayence, which, after traversing the long and narrow street which leads to the barrier of Markrannstadt, enters the city by the Halle gate, over a bridge at the same place. There were no other arches over the

Elster but one or two wooden ones for foot passengers, and the stone bridge over which the great road passes, well known from the frightful catastrophe a few days after, which has rendered it immortal in history. To the east the country consists of a beautiful plain, in the highest state of cultivation, offering a theatre worthy of the battle which was to decide the fate of Europe. To the south-east, like a chain of verdure, extend the hills of Wachau, then occupied in force by Murat's army; while to the north-west, in the direction of Möckern, the windings of the Partha, and the gentle swells and villages adjoining its banks, present a variety of obstacles to retard the advance of an enemy.

23. No sooner was the arrival of the Emperor known to Murat, than he hastened to wait upon him; and the two sovereigns rode out together towards the heights behind Liebertwolkwitz, from whence the whole plain to the south-east of Leipsic can be described. From an elevated point in that direction, near the bed of the Pleisse, Napoleon surveyed the whole field, and gave the necessary orders for the day following. Seated by a blazing watch-fire, after his usual custom, in the midst of the squares of his Guard, he long and anxiously surveyed the ground, and in particular the mossy and swampy beds of the Pleisse and the Elster, which extended, in a broad belt, nearly two miles across, in the rear of the whole position occupied by the French army. From thence he rode on to the hills of Liebertwolkwitz, from which elevated ridge not only the positions of his own troops, but the advanced posts of the enemy, were visible. The heads of the Russian and Austrian columns appeared in great strength within cannon-range. But as yet all was still: not a sound was heard, and no appearance of hostilities was visible. Here an imposing ceremony took place, in the distribution of eagles by Napoleon to three regiments which had not hitherto received them; and he returned to Leipsic by the course of the Pleisse, after inspecting Poniatowski's Poles, who

occupied the marshy banks of that stream.

24. The positions occupied by the French army on the night of the 15th, were as follows:—Bertrand's corps held Lindenau, at the entrance of the chaussée which crossed the marshes of the Elster, in order to cover that important defile, and keep at a distance a strong column of the enemy, which, having gained the great road to Erfurth, menaced the rear, and had already entirely cut off the communications of the French army. To the eastward of the marshes, under the immediate command of the Emperor, three corps were stationed, facing to the southward; viz. Poniatowski's Poles on the right, on the edge of the Elster and Pleisse, between Mark-Kleeberg and Connewitz; next Augereau, on the southern slope of the heights of Wachau, flanked on either side by Milhaud's and Kellerman's cavalry; behind Wachau were placed Victor's men; from thence to Liebertswolkwitz stretched Lauriston's corps; on their left, Macdonald, who was every instant expected, was to debouch from Holzhausen; Lautour-Maubourg and Sebastiani's horse stood on the left flank of Lauriston's corps; while the Imperial Guard, around Napoleon, were in reserve near Probstheyda. In all, six corps of infantry and four of horse, mustering a hundred and ten thousand men, of whom eighteen thousand were cavalry; and of these a hundred thousand were to the eastward of the Pleisse, and on the proper field of battle.

25. To the north-west of Leipsic, but so far removed from it as to be a separate army, a considerable force was collected to combat Blücher and the Prince-Royal of Sweden, who, in that direction, were drawing near to the city with a formidable array of troops. They consisted of Marmont's corps and two divisions of Ney's, which were posted between Möckern and Euteritzsch; the other division of Ney's corps, with the artillery, were on march from Düben, but had not yet taken up their ground. Arrighi's cavalry, however, three thousand strong,

had come up, and Reynier's Saxons were hourly expected. The forces on the ground consisted of forty-five thousand infantry and three thousand cavalry. The whole army, already arrived, or on the road from Düben, and certain to take part in the battle, amounted to a hundred and forty thousand infantry and thirty-five thousand cavalry, with seven hundred and twenty pieces of cannon, distributed in three hundred and eighty-four battalions, and three hundred and seventy-two squadrons. An immense force! equal to that with which Napoleon had conquered at Wagram, and superior to that which had fought at Borodino;* but, great as it was, it was overmatched by the ranks of the Allies, who had now arrayed under their banners the greatest military force that modern Europe had ever seen assembled in a single field.

26. The forces of the Allies were divided, like the French, into two armies; the principal of which, under Schwarzenberg, was opposed to the Grand Army of Napoleon, while that of the north, under Bernadotte and Blücher, advanced against Ney and Marmont. They were thus arranged in the Grand Army for the attack of the French from the south. On their own left, opposite to the French right, and on the edge of the morass on the left bank of the Elster, stood Giulay's corps of Austrians, with Lichtenstein and Thielman's light troops; the centre, opposite to Wachau, and stretching from thence across the Pleisse, towards the Elster, was very strong, consisting of Meerfeldt and the Prince of Hesse-Homburg's Austrians, Wittgenstein's Russians, and Kleist's Prussians; while the right wing, opposed to Macdonald and Lauriston, was composed of Klenau's corps of Austrians; Ziethen's brigade of Prussians, who were at Gross Pössnau, having their extreme flank covered by the Cossacks under Platoff. The reserve, consisting of the Russian and Prussian Guards, and two divisions of cuirassiers, under the Grand-duke Con-

* *Ante*, chap. lix. § 24; and chap. lxxii. § 80.

stantine and Milaradowich, were at Magdeborra.

27. The great defect of this arrangement, which no representations on the part of the Russian generals could induce Prince Schwartzberg to alter, was, that the rivers Elster and Pleisse flowed through the middle of the allied line, separating thus the left wing from the centre, and one part of the centre from the other—a most perilous situation, if any disaster had rendered it necessary for one part of the allied line to assist the other, and which exposed the portion of it placed between the two rivers to imminent danger. The Austrian general even carried his infatuation so far, as to desire to post the flower of the allied army, the Russian and Prussian Guards, in the narrow space between the Pleisse and the Elster; and it was only by the determined resistance of the Emperor Alexander, that they were brought to the decisive point in the centre, to the east of both these rivers. Although Benningsen's corps and Colloredo's reserves had not yet come up, the force here assembled was immense: it consisted of no less than a hundred and forty-three thousand combatants, of which twenty-five thousand were cavalry, with six hundred and twenty guns. Benningsen and Colloredo's reserve, although not in time for the battle on the 16th, might be expected on the day following: and they were thirty-eight thousand more, of whom three thousand were horse, with a hundred and thirty pieces of cannon.

28. To the north of Leipsic, the disproportion was still greater. The armies of Silesia and Bernadotte, which lay in that direction, formed in all a mass of a hundred and three thousand combatants, of whom sixteen thousand were cavalry, with three hundred and ninety pieces of cannon. They had not, however, all come up. Bernadotte, as already mentioned, had made an eccentric movement towards the Elbe, and the troops in line consisted only of the corps of Langeron and York, with Sacken in reserve, which had their headquarters at Schkeu-

ditz, on the road to Halle; and they amounted to fifty-six thousand effective men, with three hundred and fifty-six guns. Thus the contending parties towards Möckern were very nearly matched on the first day; the French having forty-eight thousand, and the Allies fifty-six thousand men. But if the contest should be prolonged for another day, and the Prince-Royal come up in time to take part in it, forty-seven thousand additional combatants would be thrown into the balance, to which the French reserves, brought from Düben, would not oppose more than thirty thousand. Thus, upon the whole, for the final shock on which the contest would ultimately depend, the Allies could count upon two hundred and ninety thousand men, and above thirteen hundred guns; while the French could only reckon on a hundred and seventy-five thousand men, and seven hundred and twenty pieces of cannon. A fearful disproportion, which all the advantages of Napoleon's central position and great abilities could hardly compensate; and which demonstrated that the formidable military confederacy, of which he had so long formed the head, was now fairly overmatched by the vast host which its intolerable exactions had arrayed to assert the independence of mankind.*

29. At midnight on the night of the 15th, two rockets were sent up to a prodigious height from the headquarters of Prince Schwartzberg, to the south of Leipsic, and were immediately answered by three, two of a blue and one of a red light, from Blücher's, on the north. These awful signals told the assembled myriads, that all things were in readiness in both armies, and that the hour of the final struggle had struck. All was tranquil in the French lines: their watchfires burned with a steady light, and no moving figures around the flame indicated an intention to retreat. Un-speakable was the ardour which the

* See Appendix D, Chap. LXXXI., where a detailed account of the whole forces engaged on either side at Leipsic is given.

solemnity of the moment excited in the allied ranks. Now was the appointed time—now was the day of salvation. Retreat to the enemy without a conflict was impossible: the host of Germany encircled his ranks: on the morrow, the mighty conflict which was to avenge the wrongs of twenty years, and determine whether they and their children were to be freemen or slaves, was to be decided. Confidence pervaded every bosom; hope beat high in every heart. Recent success, present strength, seemed the certain harbingers of victory. A sombre feeling of disquietude, on the other hand, pervaded the French army: their ancient courage was the same, their hereditary spirit was unshaken; but disaster had chilled their ardour, diminished numbers depressed their hopes, and their confidence in the star of the Emperor had been irrevocably shaken. Still they looked forward undaunted to the fight, and resolved to show themselves, under whatever fortune, worthy of the eagles which they bore.

30. At daybreak, the following noble proclamation was issued by Prince Schwartzenberg, and read at the head of every company and squadron in his army:—"The most important epoch of this sacred war has arrived, brave warriors! Prepare for the combat. The bond which unites so many powerful nations in the most just, as well as the greatest of causes, is about to be yet closer drawn, and rendered indissoluble on the field of battle. Russians, Prussians, Austrians! you all combat for the same cause: you fight for the liberty of Europe—for the independence of your children—for the immortal renown of your names. All for each! each for all! With this device, the sacred combat is about to commence. Be faithful at the decisive moment, and victory is our own." No proclamation was issued to the French army: no heart-stirring words breathed the fire of Napoleon's spirit, or announced the well-known prophecy of victory—an ominous circumstance, indicating in no equivocal manner that the Emperor's confidence in his fortune was at an end.

31. Early in the morning of the 16th, Napoleon repaired to the army of Murat, and, from a height near Liebertwolkwitz, long and anxiously surveyed the field of the approaching battle. Precisely at nine, three guns were discharged from the centre of Schwartzenberg's army, and immediately the fire began along the whole line. The allied columns, dark and massy, advanced to the attack in the most imposing array; two hundred pieces of artillery preceded their march, and soon the cannonade on the two sides exceeded anything ever heard in the annals of war. The earth, literally speaking, trembled under the discharge, on the two sides, of above a thousand guns: the balls flew over every part of the field of battle, and killed several persons in Napoleon's suite, as well as in the Guards and cuirassiers, who were stationed a little in the rear; while through the midst of the iron tempest the allied columns advanced to the attack. Slowly but steadily the vast host moved forward. The eye sought in vain to measure its dimensions: innumerable battalions and squadrons covered the field in every part. From the steeples of Leipsic it seemed as if a dark forest of immeasurable extent was slowly approaching the city. The scene realised, on a far greater scale, all that the genius of Homer had prefigured of the Grecian host which advanced against Troy:—

—"With noise the field resounds;
Thus numerous and confused, extending wide,
The legions crowd Scamander's flowing side:
With rushing troops the plains are covered o'er,
And thundering footsteps shake the sounding shore;
Along the river's level meads they stand,
Thick as in spring the flowers adorn the land,
Or leaves the trees."^{*}

Kleist, with the left, following the course of the Elster, moved against Mark-Kleeberg, of which he soon made himself master. To check his progress beyond that village, a considerable body of Milhaud's horse were brought forward by Poniatowski; but

^{*} Pope's *Homer*, ii. 546.

Lewachoff, at the head of two regiments of Russian cuirassiers, boldly charged across the ravine which descends from the heights of Wachau to that village, and, scaling the rugged banks on the opposite side, dispersed the enemy's horse, and, pushing right on, carried confusion into the French right, and even compelled Napoleon himself, with his suite, to give ground. The Imperial Guard and two regiments of cuirassiers were brought up; but though they checked Lewachoff's advance, yet he retired in good order, and brought back his men without sustaining any serious loss. In the centre, however, the attack was not equally successful. Prince Eugene of Würtemberg was at first repulsed at Wachau by the heroic defence of Victor's men, while his guns were silenced by the superior fire of the French artillery. And although, by a great effort, he at length carried the village, he was speedily driven out again with great loss by the French reserves; while, on the right, Klenau and Gortschakoff, not having succeeded in reaching Liebertwolkwitz at the same time, ultimately failed in dislodging Lauriston permanently from that important village, though it was at first carried by the Austrians under the first of these generals. Six times did the brave Russians and Austrians return to the attack of these villages, and six times were they repulsed by the invincible resolution of Lauriston's men, supported by Macdonald's corps and Sebastiani's dragoons.

32. At eleven o'clock Macdonald brought up his whole corps in an oblique direction from Holzhausen, and, taking Klenau's attacking corps in flank, he gained considerable success. The Austrians were driven back, and a battery which they had established on the heights of the Kolmberg was taken by Charpentier's division. Encouraged by this advantage on his left, and deeming the enemy in front of Liebertwolkwitz sufficiently exhausted by three hours' continued and severe fighting, Napoleon, who arrived at noon on the heights behind Wachau, followed by the Guards and cuirassiers,

resolved to put in force his favourite measure of a grand attack on the enemy's centre. With this view, two divisions of the Young Guard, under Oudinot, were brought up and stationed close behind Wachau; two others, under Mortier, were sent to Liebertwolkwitz; Augereau was despatched from his ground on the right-centre, to support Poniatowski, who had nearly succeeded in regaining Mark-Kleeberg; and behind him the Old Guard moved forward to Dolitz, so as to be in readiness to support either the right or the centre, as circumstances might require. Finally, Drouot, with sixty guns of the Guard, so well known in all Napoleon's former battles, was brought to the front of the centre; and these pieces, moving steadily forward, soon made the earth shake by their rapid and continued fire. The allied centre was unable to resist this desperate attack: Victor and Oudinot, preceded by the terrible battery, steadily gained ground; the advance of Macdonald's column at Wagram seemed to be again renewed under circumstances precisely similar; and Napoleon, deeming the battle gained, sent word to the King of Saxony in Leipsic that he was entirely successful, and had made two thousand prisoners. He enjoined him to cause all the bells to be rung in the city and adjoining villages, to announce his victory.

33. Schwartzenberg, finding his centre thus violently assailed, made the most vigorous efforts to support it. Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, unable to resist the shock of Victor, supported by the Old Guard and Drouot's artillery, gave ground and was rapidly falling into confusion, when Raefskoi was brought up to support him with his invincible grenadiers. The brave Russians took post, one division behind the sheepfold of Auenhayn, and the other at Gossa; and, without once flinching before the terrible battery, kept up so incessant a fire of musketry as at length arrested the progress of the enemy. Klenau, however, attacked in front by Lauriston, and threatened in flank by Macdonald, was unable to maintain himself on the

slopes of Liebertwolkwitz, and was forced back, after a desperate resistance by his cavalry, to Gross Pössnau and Seyffertshayn, where he at length succeeded in maintaining himself, though with great difficulty, till night-fall. Schwartzberg, seeing his centre so nearly forced by the impetuous attack of the French Guard, ordered up the Austrian reserve, under Prince Hesse-Homburg, from Zöbiger, where it had been stationed, in spite of the strenuous remonstrances of Alexander and Jomini, on the other side of the Pleisse, and consequently in a situation where it could not be brought to bear on the decisive point without a long delay. They were hurried as fast as possible across the river; but meanwhile Napoleon, desirous of beating down the resistance of Raefiskoi's grenadiers, moved forward his reserve cavalry under Latour-Maubourg and Kellerman. At the same time an attack by infantry was ordered, under Charpentier, on an old intrenchment on a hill called the Swedish redoubt, where the bones of the warriors of the great Gustavus reposed, which had been won from the French in the early part of the day. So vehement, however, was the fire from the batteries on the summit, that the assaulting regiments paused at the foot of the hill. Napoleon hastened to the spot:—"What regiment is that?" said he to Charpentier.—"The 22d light infantry," replied the general. "That is impossible," replied Napoleon; "the 22d would never let themselves be cut down by grape-shot without taking their muskets from their shoulders." These words being repeated to the regiment, they were so stung by the reproach, that, breaking into a charge, they ran up the hill and carried the post, which seemed to give the Emperor a decisive advantage in that part of the field of battle.

34. Such was the impression soon after produced by the reserve cavalry, that terrible arm which always formed so important an element in Napoleon's tactics, that it had well-nigh decided the battle in his favour. At one o'clock in the afternoon, Kellerman,

at the head of six thousand horse, debouched from Wachau, to the left of that village, supported by several squares of infantry, and advanced rapidly against the retiring columns of Prince Eugene of Würtemberg. Lewachoff, proud of his gallant achievement in the morning, threw himself, with his three regiments of Russian cuirassiers, in the way of the charge; but he was speedily overwhelmed, and driven back with great loss towards Gossa. The consequences might have been fatal, had not Alexander, by the advice of Jomini, shortly before brought up his Guards and reserves to the menaced point in the centre, where they were stationed behind the Göselbach; while Schwartzberg, now sensible, when it was all but too late, of his inexplicable error in stationing the Austrian reserves in a position between the Elster and the Pleisse, where they could be of no service, hurried forward the Austrian cuirassiers of the Guard to the point of danger. This superb corps, consisting of six regiments cased in steel, the very flower of the Imperial army, under Count Nostitz, after crossing the Pleisse at Grübern, arrived at the menaced point at the critical moment, and instantly bore down with loud cheers and irresistible force on the flank of Kellerman's dragoons, when somewhat disordered by the rout of Lewachoff's men. The effect was instantaneous; the French horse were routed and driven back in great disorder to the heights behind Wachau, where, however, they re-formed under cover of the powerful batteries which there protected the French centre.

35. While extreme danger was thus narrowly avoided in the centre to the west of Wachau, peril still more imminent threatened the Allies to the east of that village. Latour-Maubourg and Murat, at the head of four thousand cuirassiers of the Guard, there bore down on the flank of the allied right, while Victor and Lauriston assailed its front. This double charge was at first attended with great success. Though the brave Latour-Maubourg had his leg carried off by a cannon-

shot in the advance,* the ponderous mass advanced in admirable order under Bordesoult, broke Prince Eugene of Würtemberg's infantry by a charge in flank, routed ten light squadrons of the Russian Guard, which strove to arrest its progress, and captured six-and-twenty guns. So violent was the onset, so complete the opening made in the centre of the Allies by this terrible charge, that the French horsemen pushed on to the position where the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia had taken their station, and they were obliged to mount on horseback and retire a little distance to the rear, to avoid being made prisoners.

36. But in this decisive moment Alexander was not wanting to himself or the cause with which he was intrusted. Imitating the coolness of Napoleon on occasion of a similar crisis at the cemetery of Eylau [*ante*, Chap. XLIV. § 66], he boldly advanced to the front, and ordered the red Cossacks of the Guard under Orloff Denisoff to charge the enemy's flank, while the heavy cavalry of Barclay were also called up, and the last reserve batteries directed to open their fire. These dispositions, promptly taken and rapidly executed, changed the fate of the day. With resistless force, Orloff Denisoff's men, all chosen cavaliers from the banks of the Don, bore down on the flank of the French cuirassiers immediately after they had captured the guns, and when their horses were blown by previous efforts. Their long lances were more than a match for the cuirassiers' sabres: instantly the whole hostile squadrons were pierced through and routed, four-and-twenty of the guns retaken, and the French cavalry driven back with immense loss to their own lines. Resuming the offensive, Raefskoi's grenadiers now attacked the sheep-fold of Auenhayn, the object already of such desperate strife, and

carried it at the point of the bayonet—an acquisition which, from its elevated position, again gave the Allies the advantage in that part of the field.

37. The crisis of the battle was now passed; the direction of Napoleon's attacks was clearly indicated; Schwartzenberg had gained time to rectify his faulty dispositions, and he had brought up his powerful reserves from the other side of the Pleisse to the scene of danger. At three o'clock in the afternoon, the Austrian reserves came up to the front at all points: Bianchi relieved, at Mark-Kleeberg, Kleist's troops, who had with great difficulty maintained themselves there against the attack of Augereau and Poniatowski; and, turning the powerful batteries which they brought up against the flank of Augereau's corps, they compelled it to fall back to its original position. Bianchi followed up his advantage: he issued from Mark-Kleeberg and charged the right flank of Napoleon's centre with loud cries, and with such vigour that all around the Emperor deemed the battle lost. He himself was forced to retire some hundred paces. Instantly, however, like Alexander, an hour before, he ordered up the battalions of the Old Guard, who stopped the head of the column; but its numerous artillery played in the most destructive manner on the flank of Victor's corps, and compelled it to fall back to the French lines. At the same time, the cannon sounded violently on the north, and repeated couriers from Marmont and Ney announced that, so far from being able to render the Emperor any farther assistance, they could with difficulty maintain themselves against the impetuous attacks of Blücher.

38. Sensible that, if success now escaped him, he would in vain seek to recall it on the following day, when the Prince-Royal Benningesen, and Colloredo had brought up nearly a hundred thousand fresh troops to the enemy's standards, Napoleon resolved to make one effort more for victory. With this view, between five and six o'clock, he re-formed his reserve cavalry behind Liebertwolkwitz: Victor's

* Amputation was immediately performed on this distinguished officer, which he bore with his usual courage and *sang-froid*. His servant, a faithful domestic, having given way to an agony of grief at the sight, he said, "Why do you distress yourself? you will only have one boot to clean."—ODELBLEN, ii. 32.

and Lauriston's corps were thrown into a deep column of attack, and, preceded by a numerous array of artillery, advanced against Gossa. Such was the weight of the mass, and the rapidity with which the guns were discharged, that Gortschakoff's corps was broken, and Gossa, taken; but in this extremity Schwartzberg brought up the Prussian division of Pirach, which regained the village, and drove back the column to a considerable distance; while a powerful Russian battery of eighty pieces of the Guard, by the precision and rapidity of their fire, arrested the progress of the enemy in that quarter. Excessive fatigue prevented either party from making any further efforts in the centre and left, and the battle there was reduced to a furious cannonade, which continued without intermission till night overspread the scene.

39. Meerfeldt soon after came up, having been long retarded in his march across the swamps between the Pleisse and the Elster, by the almost impracticable nature of the ground. Late in the evening, however, he succeeded in crossing the latter stream by the ford of Dolitz, and was advancing at the head of the leading battalion to attack the French right flank near Mark-Kleeberg, when he was suddenly assailed by a division of the Old Guard in front, and by Poniatowski's Poles in flank, and driven back with great loss into the river. Meerfeldt himself was made prisoner, with a whole battalion, and immediately brought into the Emperor's presence. Although the repulse of his corps was of no material consequence to the issue of the day, it threw a ray of glory over this well-contested field of carnage.

40. On the other side of the Elster, Giulay was engaged the whole day, with various success, against Bertrand's corps. Though far removed from the headquarters of either army, and separated by five miles of marshes and broken ground from the great body of the combatants, the struggle there was one of life and death to the French army; for Bertrand fought for

Lindenau, and their only line of retreat to the Rhine in case of disaster. The Austrians were at first successful though not without a desperate struggle. After seven hours' hard fighting, their gallant corps overcame the stubborn resistance of the French, and Bertrand was not only driven out of Lindenau into the marshes, but forced to take refuge behind the Luppe, where his troops, drawn up in several squares, maintained the contest only by a loose fire of tirailleurs. If Giulay had, as soon as he got possession of the town, broken the bridges of Lindenau, the communications of the French army would have been entirely cut off, and their retreat to the Rhine rendered impossible. Seriously alarmed at the prospect of such a disaster, Napoleon sent positive orders to Bertrand to regain that important post at all hazards, coupled with severe remarks upon his having ever lost it. Stung to the quick by these reproaches, that brave general immediately re-formed his troops into columns of attack, and, falling suddenly on the Austrians, who, deeming the contest over, were off their guard, drove them out of Lindenau, and reopened the communications of the Grand Army. Giulay, upon this, drew off his troops to the ground they had occupied at the commencement of the action.

41. To the north-west of Leipsic, on the side of Möckern, a conflict took place, less important as regarded the number of forces engaged, but not inferior in the valour and obstinacy displayed on both sides, between the armies of Blücher and Ney. The Prussian general, in conformity with the concerted plan of operations, had put himself in motion at daybreak, from his position in front of Halle, and advanced in two columns: Langeron by Radeefeld and Breitenfeld; and York by Lützschena and Lindenthal on Möckern; while Sacken formed the reserve. Before they reached the enemy, however, who was posted near Schkeuditz, the action had begun on the south of Leipsic; and Ney, who had the command, was so impressed

with the awful cannonade which was heard in that direction, that he despatched two divisions of his own corps, now under the command of Souham, towards Wachau, to reinforce the Emperor. The effects of this generous zeal were in the highest degree disastrous to the French arms. The other divisions of Souham's corps having not yet come up from Düben, the French marshal had not at his disposal, after this large deduction, above twenty-five thousand foot and three thousand horse, while Blücher had fifty-six thousand. Ney drew up his troops in a strong position, the right in front of a wood of some extent in the neighbourhood of Breitenfeld, and occupying the villages of Gross and Klein Widderritzsch; the line extending from thence through Lindenthal to Möckern on the left. Advanced posts also occupied Radefeld and other villages in front. Langeron was directed to expel the enemy from Radefeld; and, pushing on, to force Breitenfeld, and drive him into the open plain beyond, towards Leipsic: while York, on the French left, following the great road to Leipsic, was to turn to its left at Lützschen, and drive the enemy from Lindenthal.

42. At the first onset, Ney, finding himself assailed by such superior forces, abandoned Radefeld and the villages in front, and drew in his advanced posts over a considerable space to the main line running from Lindenthal to Möckern. There, however, notwithstanding his great inferiority of force, he stood firm, and a most obstinate conflict ensued. The wood on their right, and the villages of Gross and Klein Widderritzsch, furiously assailed by Langeron, were as bravely defended by the French marshal; but, after being three times taken and retaken, they finally remained in the possession of the Allies. York at the same time commenced a vigorous attack on Möckern, on the extreme French left; while the Russian horse charged with the utmost gallantry the French batteries and squares in the open plain between the villages. After a most sanguinary conflict, in

the course of which it was five times taken and retaken, Möckern was carried by York; and Marmont's corps, driven back to the open plain in the direction of the Partha, soon fell into disorder, and lost a considerable part of its artillery, under the repeated charges of the Russian and Prussian cavalry. The whole French line was falling into confusion before Sacken came up with the Russian reserve, so that he was not required to take part in the action. Late in the evening, Delmas' division of Souham's corps arrived from Düben, and was immediately hurried forward to the right, to cover the retreat of the park of Souham's corps, which was in the most imminent danger of falling into the hands of the victorious Russians. But, though this calamity was averted by the good countenance which that body showed, yet it was too late to retrieve the day; and the shattered remains of Ney's army retired behind the Partha, having lost an eagle, two standards, twenty guns, and two thousand prisoners, besides four thousand killed and wounded, in this well-fought field. In addition, thirty cannon were surprised by the Cossacks on the night following; and this concluded an action in which the French, though defeated by superior numbers, displayed the most heroic courage and devotion.

43. The battle of the 16th, though it terminated decisively in favour of the Allies only on the side of the Partha, yet was, in its general results, entirely to their advantage. Situated as Napoleon was, an indecisive action was equivalent to a defeat: his affairs were in such a situation, that nothing could retrieve them but a decisive victory. Under Napoleon in person the French might boast with reason of having had the advantage, since the Allies who made the attack had been unable, excepting at Mark-Kleeberg, to force them from their position; and the loss, which was upwards of fifteen thousand on each side, was pretty nearly balanced. But the defeat at Möckern threatened his rear; the frightful peril incurred at Lindenau, had shown the hazard in which his

communications were placed. The enemy on the succeeding day would receive reinforcements to the amount of nearly a hundred thousand men, while he could not draw to his standards above thirty-five thousand; and his position, separated from his reserve park of ammunition, which was at Torgau, and his only magazines, which were at Magdeburg, with a single chaussée traversing two miles of morasses for his line of retreat, was in the last degree perilous. Sound policy, therefore, counselled immediate preparations for a retreat, when his forces were still in a great measure unbroken, and he could, by holding Leipsic as a *l'île-de-pont*, gain time for his immense army to defile over the perilous pass in its rear. As soon as the junction of Reynier's corps and the grand park of artillery was secured, he might have retired with comparatively little loss, and probably without any molestation, on the 17th. But Napoleon could not brook the idea of retiring from an open field, in which he himself had commanded. His position, as the head of a revolutionised military state, forbade it. Continued success, the dazzling world by ceaseless triumphs, was to him the condition of existence. He had announced to the King of Saxony that he had been victorious: all the bells in and around Leipsic had been rung to celebrate his triumph: if he now retreated, it would be to announce to all Europe that he had been defeated. Actuated by these feelings, as well as by a lingering confidence in his good fortune, and in the likelihood of the allied generals falling into some error which might give him the means of striking a decisive blow from his central position, he resolved to remain firm. But in doing so, he committed a fatal error. He not only made no preparations for a retreat, but gave no directions for throwing any additional bridges over the Elster and Pleisse in his rear, though the engineers could have established twenty in a single night.

44. No sooner had the firing ceased than Napoleon ordered Meerfeldt to

be brought into his presence. He hailed with the utmost eagerness the opportunity of reopening, by means of the Austrian general, with whom he was well acquainted, diplomatic relations, which he hoped might become separate and confidential, with the Emperor Francis and the cabinet of Vienna. Having partaken of the frugal supper which the bivouac would alone afford even for the imperial table, Meerfeldt was at ten at night introduced into the Emperor's cabinet. By a singular coincidence, it was he who had come a suppliant on the part of the Emperor of Germany to solicit the armistice of Leoben: it was he who had conducted, on the part of the cabinet of Vienna, the treaty of Campo-Formio; and it was from his hand, on the night following the battle of Austerlitz, that the pencil note had come which gave the first opening to the conferences that led to the peace of Presburg. The mutations of fortune had now brought the same general to the Emperor's tent, when the latter in his turn had become the suppliant, and he was to solicit, not to concede, peace and salvation from his former imperial opponents. He addressed to him some obliging expressions on the misfortune which he had sustained in being made prisoner, and dismissed him to the Austrian headquarters, stored with every imaginable argument that could be urged against continuing in the Russian alliance; and offering, on condition of an armistice being immediately concluded, to evacuate Germany, and retire behind the Rhine till the conclusion of a general peace. "Adieu, general,"* said he, when he

* "Our political alliance," said Napoleon, "is broken up; but between your master and me there is another bond which is indissoluble. That it is which I invoke; for I shall always place confidence in the regard of my father-in-law. It is to him I shall never cease to appeal from all that passes here. You see how they attack me, and how I defend myself. Does your cabinet never weigh the consequences of such exasperation? If it is wise it will speedily do so: it can do so this evening; to-morrow it may perhaps be too late, for who can foretell the events of to-morrow? They deceive themselves in regard to my disposition: I ask nothing but to repose in the shadow of peace, and to

dismissed Meerfeldt on his parole; "when on my behalf you shall speak of an armistice to the two Emperors, I doubt not the voice which strikes their ears will be eloquent indeed in recollections."

45. Napoleon's sense of the dangers of his situation was sufficiently evinced by his offering to retire from Germany on condition that an armistice was agreed to. He passed a melancholy night after Meerfeldt had departed, his tents being placed in the bottom of a dried fishpond, not far from the road which leads to Rochlitz, where they were pitched in the middle of the squares of the Old Guard. The cannon continued to boom occasionally on the side of Mark-Kleeberg through the whole night, where the advanced posts were almost touching each other. The most sombre presentiments filled the minds of the generals who attended on the Emperor. Ammunition was already becoming scarce, and no fresh supplies could be obtained; a few potatoes found in the fields were all the provisions the men could obtain in the country, and the stores in Leipsic would soon be exhausted. Certain ruin appeared to await them, when the army, which had not been able to discomfit the enemy to whom they had been opposed, was assailed in addition by a hundred thousand fresh troops, who would come up on the succeeding day. Still the Emperor, though fully aware of his danger, made no preparations against it; not a carriage was directed to the rear, not a bridge was thrown over the Elster; but, relying on the valour of his soldiers, his own good

dream of the happiness of France, after having dreamt of its glory. You are afraid of the sleep of the lion: you fear that you will never be easy after having pared his nails and cut his mane. You think only of repaying by a single stroke the calamities of twenty years; and, carried away by this idea, you never perceive the changes which time has made around you, and that now for Austria to gain at the expense of France, is to lose. Reflect on it, general: it is neither Austria, nor France, nor Prussia, singly, that will be able to arrest on the Vistula the inundation of a people half nomad, essentially conquering, and whose dominions extend from this to China."—FAIN, ii. 412, 413.

fortune, and the strength of Leipsic as a *point d'appui* to his centre, the mighty conqueror remained in moody obstinacy to await the stroke of fate.

46. The allied sovereigns were too well aware of the advantages of their situation, either to fall into the snare which Napoleon had laid for them, by sending back Meerfeldt with proposals for an armistice, or to throw these advantages away by precipitating the attack before their whole forces had come up. Under pretence, therefore, of referring the proposals to the Emperor of Austria, Schwartzemberg eluded them altogether; and no answer was returned to them till after the French had recrossed the Rhine. Meanwhile the great reinforcements on which they relied were approaching. Bernadotte, on the 16th, had reached Landsberg, on his way back from the Elbe, to which he had been drawn by Napoleon's demonstrations against Berlin; Benningsen was at Cölditz, and Colloredo at Borna; so that all three might be expected to take part in the action in the evening of the following day. The attack, accordingly, was ordered for two o'clock in the afternoon of that day; but such was the badness of the roads to the southward, from the immense multitude of artillery and chariots which had passed over them, that Colloredo and Benningsen had not then come up, and did not reach their ground, the former till four, the latter till late in the evening. The attack was, therefore, adjourned till the following morning, when the troops were ordered to be in readiness by daybreak; and no doubt was entertained of success, as the grand allied army would then be reinforced by above fifty thousand combatants, besides those who joined Blücher and Bernadotte.

47. But although matters were thus favourable to the Allies on the ground where Napoleon and the allied sovereigns commanded in person, to the south of Leipsic, affairs were far from being in an equally satisfactory state to the north of that town, where Blücher was opposed to Ney and Mar-mont. Reynier had now come up

from Düben, which rendered him more than a match for the army of Silesia, weakened as that noble host was by six thousand men lost on the preceding day, and the incessant fighting which it had sustained since the commencement of the campaign. A violent cavalry action on the 17th, between Arrighi's dragoons and Wassilchikoff's Cossacks, on the banks of the Partha, had only terminated to the advantage of the Allies by their bringing up the reserve hussars, who at length drove the enemy back to the very walls of Leipsic. Everything, therefore, on that side depended upon bringing the Prince-Royal into action; but in that quarter a most alarming degree of backwardness had become visible, which threatened the cause of the Allies with the most serious consequences. Not only had Bernadotte, in pursuance of his usual system of saving the Swedes, so successfully applied at Gross Beeren and Dennewitz, ar-

ranged the troops of his own dominions a full march in the rear of the Russians and Prussians; but instead of directing them to Halle, as he was recommended, where they would have been, if not in a line with Blücher, at least not very far in his rear, he had moved the Russians only to Zörbig, while the Prussians and Swedes stretched by the Peterberg and Gröbzig, so far from the decisive point as to be of no service whatever in the crisis which was approaching.

48. Fortunately for the Allies and the cause of European freedom, their interests were at this juncture supported, at the headquarters of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, by men whose discernment showed them where the decisive point lay, and whose moral courage rendered them equal to the task of enforcing it upon the commander. Sir Charles Stewart and General Pozzo di Borgo* were officially attached to his headquarters on the part

* Charles André Pozzo di Borgo was born at Pozzo di Borgo, near Ajaccio, in Corsica, on 8th March 1768, in the same year as Napoleon. His history was throughout life so intimately blended with that of Napoleon, that in the age of astrology it would have been said that they were born under the influence of the same planets, with this difference, that their respective apogees and perigees were reversed. The family of the Pozzo di Borgo (*Puits de Village*, "well of the village,") was a very ancient one in Corsica, and belonged to the native race; while that of the Buonapartes and the Salicetti was descended from the Italians, whom the revolutions of the neighbouring peninsula had, in the course of ages, brought to seek refuge in its mountain solitudes. From his earliest years young Pozzo di Borgo belonged to the national party, and was closely allied with its noble hero, Paoli, who struggled for the preservation of old institutions and national independence: the Buonapartes, with Arena and Salicetti, were connected with the Jacobin clubs, and aimed, by French interference, at the overthrow of society. In 1789, Pozzo di Borgo, then in his twenty-second year, already secretary of the noblesse of Corsica, was sent as deputy of the nobles to the National Assembly. He spoke little at the tribune, but made an eloquent oration in the interest of the Girondists, to which party he belonged, on the war with Germany on the 16th July 1792. At the termination of the Constituent Assembly he returned to Corsica, and united with Paoli in the administration of the island. France, under the administration of the Girondists, was then dreaming of a federal union of little repub-

lics; and Paoli and Pozzo di Borgo, for a short period, deemed it practicable to realise that union among their rugged mountains. The Salicetti, Arenas, and Buonapartes, on the other hand, dwelling in the cities of the plain, were associated with their ardent population, and supported a republic one and indivisible, in order to obtain the constant support of the Jacobins of Paris. The influence of those families obtained from the Convention an order for Paoli and Pozzo di Borgo to attend at the bar of the Assembly to justify their conduct, at a time when obedience to such an order was certain death. In these perilous circumstances an assembly was held at Corse, the ancient capital of the island, at which it was resolved to disregard the decrees of the Convention, and continue the administration of Paoli and Pozzo di Borgo. They declared "that it was not worthy of the dignity of the Corsican people to occupy themselves with the families Arena and Buonaparte, and that they abandon them to their infamy and remorse, for having separated themselves from the national cause."

It is difficult to see, however, how Corsica could have maintained itself against its terrible neighbour, had not at this critical juncture an event occurred, which for a brief period enabled them to preserve their independence. Toulon had fallen into the hands of the Republic, and the English squadron, expelled from its spacious harbour, cast anchor before Ajaccio, in hopes of finding, in the national spirit of Corsica, some compensation for their recent disaster. Paoli and Pozzo di Borgo gladly availed themselves of this fortunate circumstance to extricate their country from the tyranny of the Jacobins, and it was im-

of their respective courts, and both possessed great influence with his Royal Highness; for the former had the disbursement of the British subsidies, and the latter was the accredited diplomatist and personal favourite of Alexander. Indefatigable were the efforts which these ardent men made at this crisis to overcome the backwardness of the Prince-Royal, and bring forward his powerful force, fifty thousand strong, to the support of Blücher, who was always in the front,

and might be exposed from that cause, if not adequately backed, to the most serious danger. Not only did Sir Charles personally remonstrate, in the most energetic manner, on the 14th and 15th against the pernicious and eccentric direction which Bernadotte was giving to his troops, and which had the effect of excluding them from all share in the action of the 16th; but on the morning of that day he addressed to him a written remonstrance, penned with respect but military frank-

mediately declared an independent state under the protection of Great Britain. Soon after an assembly was summoned to construct a constitution for the island, on the model of that of England; and on the recommendation of Paoli, Pozzo di Borgo was appointed president. Upon Admiral Elliot, afterwards Lord Minto, the governor of the island, seeing him, and remarking that he appeared young for a situation of such importance, Paoli replied, "I will answer for him; he is a young man, as skilful in directing the people as in acting firmly on the field of battle." Pozzo di Borgo accordingly was elected, and immediately applied himself with vigour to organising the institutions of his country, not upon their ancient but an improved model. This was the turning point of his history: thenceforward he entered heart and soul into the preservation of order, and the objects of the European alliance.

The independence of Corsica under British influence, however, existed only two years. The dense urban population, thirsting for democracy, soon proved more than a match for the scattered mountaineers, attached to old institutions: the British succours were far distant, and given in a parsimonious spirit, and the island again fell under the government of France. Compelled to leave his country, Pozzo di Borgo, with Paoli, embarked on board a frigate of the English fleet, and landed at *Sibei*, as if a mysterious destiny had in every point of his career linked his fate with that of Napoleon. From thence he came to London, where his capacity and information soon gained for him the confidence of Mr Pitt, who employed him in several diplomatic missions to Vienna. From thence he passed into the service of Russia, where in like manner he won the confidence of Alexander, by whom he was employed as diplomatic agent at the court of Naples, when Queen Caroline made her unfortunate essay in arms, on the eve of the battle of Austerlitz. Obligated to return by the peace of Presburg to St Petersburg, he received the rank of colonel in the army, and was attached to the Emperor's suite, in which capacity he was actively employed in the campaigns of Jena and Eylau, and was intrusted with several diplomatic missions of importance—particularly to Vienna and Con-

stantinople. When the peace of Tilsit again threw Russia into the French alliance, he had the prudence to request permission to travel; but in a farewell interview with Alexander he used these remarkable expressions, which subsequent events rendered prophetic:—"The alliance of your Majesty with France will not be of long duration: I know the profound dissimulation and insatiable ambition of Buonaparte. At this moment your Majesty has one arm held by Persia, and another by Turkey, while Napoleon presses on your breast. When you have loosed your hands, the weight will be more easily shaken off the breast. Adieu for a few years."

During the memorable campaign of 1809, Pozzo di Borgo was at Vienna, aiding the Austrian cabinet with his counsels, and animating it by his spirit. At the peace of Vienna, after the battle of Wagram, Napoleon, aware of his weight, made it an express condition that he should be banished from the Austrian dominions as well as from Russia. To this last condition Alexander was obliged to consent; and on this occasion Pozzo wrote a noble farewell letter, resigning his appointment in the Muscovite service, adding, "The time is not far distant when your Majesty will recall me to your service." He then repaired to Constantinople, the sole route by which at that period he could reach England, and arrived in London in October 1810, when his value was immediately discerned by Lord Castlereagh, then minister of foreign affairs, as it had formerly been by Mr Pitt. His prophecy to the Czar was soon accomplished: the terrible war of 1812 broke out; Alexander recalled his faithful servant and true prophet to his side: he was sent on the way to Stockholm, where he contributed to overcome the indecision of Bernadotte, and joined the Emperor at Kalisch, as he was on the eve of signing the Grand Alliance which delivered Europe.

As soon as he arrived, Alexander admitted Pozzo di Borgo to a private interview, in which, after recalling to his recollection his prophecy, he treated him in the kindest and most confidential manner, and, taking him by the arm, walked out with him in that manner at a parade of the Guards. The courtiers, who had received him coldly from the recollection of his former exile, were

ness, and breathing a warm but not undeserved spirit of patriotic indignation.*

49. These efforts, which were vigorously seconded by Blucher and Pozzo di Borgo, at length produced the desired effect. The circuitous sweep, indeed, which Bernadotte had given to his troops, saved Ney from destruction, and doubled Blucher's losses on the 16th; but at length he was brought forward to his ground. On the night of the 16th, Bernadotte slept at Landsberg, and on the evening of the 17th he was on the heights of Breitenfeld, immediately in the rear of Blucher's army. His conduct on this occasion,

immediately all smiles: every one, regarding his fortune as made, hastened to tender to him their congratulations. Constantly attached to the headquarters of the Czar, he shared his entire confidence, and took a prominent part in the important negotiations with Great Britain and Austria which followed. He was chosen with Sir Charles Stewart, from his known energy and decision of character, for the delicate and important task of holding Bernadotte to the charge during the campaign of Leipsic, which duty he executed with equal ability and success. He was at Alexander's side when he entered Paris: he took a leading part in Napoleon's dethronement: and was long ambassador of Russia at the court of the Tuileries, when his ancient rival at Ajaccio was an exile on the rock of St Helena.—*Personal knowledge*;—and CAPEVIGUE, *Diplomates Europeans*, 124, 143; one of the ablest works of that eloquent and accomplished author.

* These letters are very curious, and remain enduring monuments both of the tortuous policy of Bernadotte at that period, and of the clear military discernment and unflinching moral courage of the Marquis of Londonderry. At 9 A.M., on the 16th, he wrote to the Prince-Royal as follows:—"According to the report of General Blucher, the enemy has quitted Delitzsch. It is of the last importance, according to my ideas, that the army of your Royal Highness should move to the left behind Delitzsch; the marshes and defiles render such a movement free of all risk, and your Royal Highness will then be in a situation to take a part in the approaching battle, which will be more decisive with your army and military talents. As the enemy's whole forces are in the environs of Leipsic, permit me to observe that the moments are precious. The English nation has its eye upon you: it is my duty to address you with frankness. The English nation will never believe that you are indifferent, provided the enemy is beaten, whether you take a part in the battle or not. I venture to beseech your Royal Highness, if you remain in the second line, to send forward

as on many others during the campaign, was not owing either to want of military discernment or physical resolution, but to secret views of political ambition. He clearly foresaw, and anxiously desired, the fall of Napoleon; but he had no wish to have a hand in completing either his destruction or that of his army. He was averse to both, as much from a natural feeling of patriotic attachment to the land of his birth, as from a conviction that such a catastrophe would prove an insurmountable bar to his own ascent of the vacant throne, on which he had already set his heart.

50. Considerable changes, during the

Captain Bogue with the rocket brigade to General Blucher, to act with the cavalry." Bernadotte, however, still hung back, and, by Blucher's desire, Sir Charles galloped to his headquarters, and found the Russians only at Landsberg; *the Prussians a march behind the Russians, and the Swedes a march behind the Prussians*. He could not obtain an interview with the Prince-Royal: but got from General Adlercrantz a promise to send forward three thousand horse next morning. Sir Charles then returned to Blucher, took part in the action, and after it was over rode back to Halle, where Bernadotte had still not arrived, and wrote to him the following laconic epistle:—"Halle, 9 P.M., 16th Oct.—I have just come from General Blucher's field of battle. I have the honour to lay before your Royal Highness the details of the action. I venture to supplicate your Royal Highness to march on Taucha the moment you receive this letter. There is not an instant to lose: your Royal Highness has pledged your word to me to do so. I must now address you as a friend. *I speak now as a soldier; and, if you do not commence your march, you will repent it as long as you live.*" To a soldier and a gentleman this was sufficient, and Bernadotte at length moved next morning, and reached his ground on the evening of the same day. He was, however, most indignant at this freedom, and the first time he saw Sir Charles afterwards, he said, "How, General Stewart! what right have you to write me? Do you forget that I am Prince of Sweden, *one of the greatest generals of the age!* And if you were in my place, what would you have thought if any one had written you as you have written me?" The Gascons are always true to their name and character. He soon, however, recovered his good-humour; and when the Marquis and Marchioness of Londonderry visited Sweden in 1838, on their way to St Petersburg, he received them, much to his credit, with the most distinguished kindness and hospitality.—LONDONDERRY, 162, 177; *War in Germany*; and *personal information*.

night of the 17th, were made by Napoleon in the disposition of his troops. At two in the morning, seeing that no answer had been returned to the propositions he had sent through Meerfeldt, he prepared for battle, and made the requisite contraction of the circle which his troops occupied, to enable them to withstand the prodigious force by which they were to be assailed. He had now brought up his whole reserves from Düben; and Reynier, with his Saxons, now reduced to eight thousand men, had joined the standards of Ney on the Partha. The troops effected a change of front to the left, the left wing being thrown back, and Connewitz, on the extreme right, serving as the pivot. Poniatowski remained fixed there, on the edge of the Elster; and the whole army, now not numbering more than a hundred and fifty thousand combatants, was arranged in a semicircle, facing outwards from that point to the extreme left, which rested on the Partha to the north of Leipsic. The line, thus contracted, abandoned Wachau, Liebertwolkwitz, and the heights in their rear, the object of such fierce contention on the preceding day; it ran from Connewitz to Probstheyda, in which last village Victor was stationed. Macdonald fell back to Holzhausen; Lauriston at Stötteritz was a reserve to the two latter corps: while the Imperial Guard, under Napoleon in person on the Thonberg, near the Tobacco-windmill, still occupied a central position, from which he could succour any point that might be peculiarly menaced. Bertrand remained in his old position at Lindenau, and detachments in observation merely occupied the villages to the westward of Tweinainsdorf and Milkau, round to Ney's army, which was in position immediately to the north of Leipsic on the Partha; Reynier at Paunsdorf, opposite Taucha; Souham at Santa Thecla; and Marmont at Neutzsch. Uneasy about his retreat, Napoleon repaired at three in the morning to Lindenau, where he had a conference with Bertrand, who received orders to push forward an advanced guard and occupy Weissenfels,

on the road to Mayence, which was done before noon on the same day. The position of the French army around Leipsic, with its flanks secured from being turned by the Elster and the Partha, and the old walls of the town itself as a great redoubt in its centre, was undoubtedly strong, and hardly liable, if bravely defended by such a force as Napoleon's, to be forced by any masses of assailants, how great soever. But it had a frightful defect, that it had but one issue for so vast a multitude of men, horse, cannon, and chariots in rear: resembling thus, in a striking manner, the position of the Russians, with the Alle at their backs, in front of Friedland [*ante*, Chap. XLVI. § 59], of which Napoleon had taken such decisive advantage in the first Polish war.

51. Schwartzenberg, on his side, made the requisite dispositions for following up his advantages, and pressing upon the columns of the French upon all sides of the narrow circle into which they had now retired. The grand army of Bohemia, and Benning's reserve from Poland, were formed into three columns; the right, under Benning's orders, composed of his own army, the corps of Klenau, and Ziethen's Prussians, was directed to advance from Gross Pössnau to Holzhausen, the centre, under Barclay de Tolly, who had the corps of Kleist and Wittgenstein under his command, with the grenadiers and Guards in reserve, assembled near Gossa, and was to advance straight upon Wachau; while the left, under the direction of the Prince of Hesse-Homburg, consisting of Meerfeldt's and Colloredo's Austrians, his own reserve, and Lichtenstein's men, was to move forward by the edge of the Elster, from Connewitz and Mark-Kleeberg, on Dolitz and Leipsic. To the north of Leipsic, also, the Prince-Royal and Blücher, now nearly a hundred thousand strong, had made their arrangements for a decisive engagement: the former, with the corps of Langeron, as well as his own troops, was to cross the Partha, turn Ney's right, and force him back upon Leipsic, from the side of Taucha, and

the road to Wittenberg; while Blucher, with his two remaining corps of Sacken and York, was to remain on the right bank of the Partha, and drive all before him who should remain on that side of the river. The forces of the Allies were more numerous than had ever been assembled in one field during modern times, for they mustered two hundred and eighty thousand combatants, with nearly fourteen hundred guns; and in intrinsic strength and military equipment, far exceeded any force ever collected for warlike purposes since the beginning of the world.* The awful nature of the contest which was approaching, its momentous results, its uncertain event, had impressed every mind with solemn feelings; which was increased by the confused murmur which arose from the innumerable multitude, the neighing of the horses, and rolling of the guns, as the preparations for the conflict commenced. But when they were completed, these feelings gave place to military ardour, and universal enthusiasm animated the men when the order to advance was given, and the immense host began to move forward against the enemy.†

52. At length the battle of giants commenced. The 18TH OCTOBER dawned, and the last hour of the French Empire began to toll. At nine, Napoleon took his station on the Thonberg: the enemy's columns were already approaching with rapid strides on all sides, and their heads were soon seen surmounting the hills of Wachau, and driving, like chaff before the wind, the French detachments which were

stationed to retard their advance in the intermediate villages. Inexpressibly awful was the spectacle which their advance afforded to the agitated multitude who thronged the steeples of Leipsic. As far as the eye could reach, the ground was covered with an innumerable multitude of men and horses; long deep masses marked the march of the infantry; dazzling lines of light indicated the squadrons of cavalry; the glancing of the bayonets in the rays of the sun, sparkled like crests of foam on a troubled ocean; while a confused murmur from their ranks sounded like the roar of a distant cataract.

— “In mighty quadrate joined
Of union irresistible, moved on
In silence their bright legions, to the sound
Of instrumental harmony, that breathed
Heroic ardour to adventurous deeds,
Under their godlike leaders, in the cause
Of God and his Messiah. On they move,
Indissolubly firm: nor obvious hill,
Nor straitening vale, nor wood, nor stream,
divides
Their perfect ranks.” ‡

The allied left, under the Prince of Hesse-Homburg, first came into action, and its success was brilliant and immediate. The resistance of the Poles on the banks of the Elster, under the brave Pońiatowski, proud of the rank of marshal of France, worthily conferred on him the day before by the Emperor, was indeed heroic; but they were unable to withstand the superior numbers and vehement attacks of the Austrians, under Bianchi and Colloredo, and gave ground. The danger on that side was soon imminent; for the victorious Austrians,

* Mardonius at Platæa is said to have had 300,000 men, and the Gauls, when they blockaded Cæsar in his lines round Alesia, had 240,000. According to Quintus Curtius, Darius at Arbela had 200,000 foot and 40,000 horse, (L. iv. c. 12, § 13); a number much more probable, of real fighting men, than 1,000,000, which Plutarch (Alexander, c. 54) and Arrian (L. iii. c. 2) assign. In India, after the bloody battle with Porus, Alexander had 90,000 infantry and 10,000 horse, with 900 chariots, (Q. Curtius, ix. 4, 16). Bajazet, at the battle of Angora, where he was defeated by Timour, is said to have had 400,000 horse and foot under his banners.—GIBBON, xii. 28, c. 65. But none of these armies could bear any comparison, in the number

of real soldiers and the military strength, with the host which fought under the allied banners at Leipsic, which was 280,000, with 1884 pieces of cannon.

† “Here a panorama of the approaching conflict presented itself to Alexander's view. Horses, as well as men, habited in superb coats of mail; preparations for battle diligent and unremitting; generals riding with active zeal along the ranks of the barbarian armies—connected with things of less moment, such as the murmur of the multitude, the neighing of horses, and the flashing of arms—disturbed his mind, anxiously revolving plans for the expected action.”—QUINTUS CURTIUS, iv. 13, § 1.

‡ *Paradise Lost*, book vi. 60.

driving the Poles and the weak remains of Augereau's corps before them, soon passed Dolitz and Lossnig, and menaced Connewitz and the suburbs of Leipsic—the only line of retreat to the army. Napoleon immediately repaired to the spot with two divisions of the Young Guard, under Oudinot, while the Old, under Mortier, was stationed in the rear, in the suburbs of Leipsic. The steady countenance of these veterans restored the combat; Hesse-Homburg was wounded; and though the Poles were driven back, after hard fighting, to Connewitz, the action on this side ceased to be alarming, and all Bianchi's efforts could not dislodge Poniatowski from that village, even with the aid of Giulay's corps, which Schwartzberg despatched to his support.

53. The village of Probstheyda formed the salient angle of the position occupied by the French around Leipsic, and as such it became, early in the day, the object of the most vehement contention between the opposite parties. Seen from the steeples of the city during the prolonged contest which surrounded its buildings, it resembled a rocky cape advanced in a tempestuous ocean, against which the surging waves incessantly beat. In the first instance, the progress of the Allies in the centre was rapid. Liebert-wolkwitz and Wachau, the scenes of such bloody struggles on the 16th, were abandoned after a slight combat of advanced posts; the allied artillery was hurried forward amidst loud shouts to the summit of the hills of Wachau, and soon two hundred pieces of cannon, arrayed along the heights, began to send an iron tempest into the French columns. But meanwhile Napoleon's batteries were not idle. Sensible of the inferiority of their pieces in point of number to those of the enemy, the men endeavoured to supply the deficiency by the rapidity of their fire, and their guns were worked with extraordinary vigour. Every cannon that could be brought to bear on either side was hurried to the front; and soon eight hundred pieces of artillery played on the hostile masses, in a space

of not more than half a league in breadth in the centre of the army. In the midst of this tremendous fire, Prince Augustus of Prussia and General Pirsch received orders, with Kleist's corps, to carry Probstheyda. Swiftly they moved over the intervening open space, and entered the village with such vigour that they reached its centre before the onset could be arrested; but there they were met by Victor and Lauriston, at the head of dense masses, who combated with such resolution that they were driven back.

54. Nothing daunted by this bloody repulse, Prince Augustus re-formed his men, and again rushed into the village, followed by Wittgenstein's Russians and nearly the whole of Kleist's corps. Such was the vehemence of their onset, that the French were entirely expelled; the fugitives and wounded overspread the plain which extended towards Leipsic. Imposing masses at the same time displayed themselves towards Holzhausen, on the French left, and the centre seemed on the point of being forced. Napoleon instantly hastened to the spot with the remaining two divisions of the Young Guard: the steady columns made their way through the crowd of fugitives who were leaving the rear of the centre, and blocked up all the roads. Amidst the clouds of dust which obscured the view, and the cries of the combatants, which drowned even the roar of the artillery, he preserved his usual calmness and decision, and, pushing forward to the front, arrested the tumult with two battalions of the Guard, and did not return to his station beside the windmill till he had entirely expelled the enemy from the village. Again the Russians under Wittgenstein, and Benning's reserves, were brought up to the attack, and dislodged the French; but a third time the invincible soldiers of Lauriston and Victor recovered their post, and hurled back the assailants with dreadful loss into the allied ranks.

55. On the right, Ziethen's Prussians marched against Holzhausen and Zuckethausen, at eleven o'clock in the

forenoon, followed by a considerable part of Benningsen's Russians in reserve. In moving up they were charged in flank by Sebastiani's dragoons; but Pahlen's and Tchaplitz's cuirassiers speedily repulsed the attack, and drove back the enemy's horse with great loss into their own lines. At the same time Platoff, with six thousand Cossacks, by a circuitous sweep turned the extreme left of the French on this side, and threatened the rear of Macdonald's corps. He, in consequence, abandoned Holzhausen, and fell back to Stotteritz, warmly pursued by the victorious Prussians; and the allied sovereigns, who had now advanced their headquarters to the sheepfold of Meitsdorf, ordered an attack on that village. Such, however, was the vehemence of the fire of the French batteries of a hundred guns, posted on either side of Probstheyda,—which, seeing their rear thus threatened, wheeled about, and opened with terrible execution on the flank of the attacking column,—that, after having all but carried the village, the assailants were forced to recoil, glad to seek shelter in the nearest hollows from the fearful tempest. Still further to the allied right, Bubna's light horse, with a body of Platoff's Cossacks, pushed across the plain beyond the reach of the combatants, and opened up a communication with Bernadotte's outposts, which soon made their appearance from the direction of Taucha: united, they fell upon the rear of the Würtemberg brigade of Normann, which straightway abandoned the colours of France, and ranged itself in the ranks of the Fatherland.

56. Schwartzenberg, finding that the resistance of the enemy to the south of Leipsic was so obstinate, and that the assault of the villages was attended with such a fearful loss of life, and having received information of decisive success to the north, which would soon render the enemy's position untenable, ordered his columns, over the whole semicircle to the south, to seek refuge in the nearest hollows from the dreadful effect of the enemy's batteries; and for the remainder of the

day confined his attack on that side to another and more powerful arm. The whole cannon of the Grand Army, amounting to above eight hundred pieces, were brought forward to the front, arranged in the form of a vast semicircle two leagues in length, from Lossnitz by the ridges of Wachau towards Holzhausen; and during the remainder of the day they kept up an incessant and most destructive fire on the enemy's columns. The French batteries in that direction, which numbered above five hundred pieces, answered with unconquerable vigour; but, independent of their inferiority in point of number, the position which the allied guns occupied was far superior, they being stationed in great part on the heights commanding the whole plain, which the enemy had occupied on the preceding day, while their semicircular position caused their concentric fire to fall with double severity on the dense and close masses of Napoleon's forces—the fire of whose batteries, on the other hand, spreading like a fan towards a wide circumference, was attended, comparatively speaking, with little effect.

57. Galled beyond endurance by the frightful discharge, Lauriston's and Victor's troops repeatedly, and almost involuntarily, rushed out of Probstheyda, and advanced with heroic resolution against the hostile batteries; but, as soon as they came within the range of grape-shot, the heads of the dense columns were swept away, and the broken remains recoiled, horror-struck, behind the shelter of the houses. For four terrible hours this awful scene lasted; the allied batteries continuing till nightfall, like a girdle of flame, their dreadful fire, while the French masses, devoted to death, still closed their ranks as they wasted away, but with unconquerable resolution maintained their ground. Close to Napoleon himself twelve guns were dismounted in a few minutes; from the ranks which immediately surrounded him, some thousand wounded were carried back to Leipsic. In Probstheyda, Vial, Rochambeau, and several generals of inferior note, were killed, and

great numbers wounded during this dreadful period. But still their columns stood firm beneath the tempest, exhibiting a sublime example of human valour rising superior to all the storms of fate.

58. While this terrible conflict was going on to the south of Leipsic, Ney and Marmont had to maintain their ground against still more overwhelming odds on the banks of the Partha. At ten in the morning, Blücher, leaving the corps of Sacken and York on the right bank, in pursuance of the plan agreed on, crossed that river, and marched to join the Prince-Royal, who, on his part, broke up at eight from Breitenfeld, and passed at Taucha and Mockau. Their united force, when they were both assembled, was little short of ninety thousand combatants, exceeding by fully forty thousand men the troops which Ney could oppose to them; and they moved direct upon Leipsic by the left bank of the river. The French general, finding himself thus outnumbered, adopted the same change of front which Napoleon had followed to the south of Leipsic, and drawing back his men to Schönfeld, Sellershausen, and Stuntz, extended across to Reynier's corps, which was established at Paunsdorf. Thus the whole French army was now arranged in a circle around the city, having its right, under Poniatowski, resting on the Pleisse at Connewitz, and the extreme left, under Marmont, at the confluence of the Partha and Elster, below the gate of Rosenthal.

59. The first incident which occurred on this side was of ominous import, and depressed the French as much as it elated the Allies. A brigade of Saxon cavalry, as soon as the Russians approached the heights of Heiterblick, where it was stationed, instead of resisting, passed over to the allied ranks. This example was speedily followed by two Saxon brigades of foot, with their whole artillery, consisting of twenty-two pieces; and the Würtemberg horse of Normann, as already noticed, immediately after went over also to the enemy. This defection in the middle

of the battle was the more discreditable, that Napoleon, anticipating something of the kind, had eight days before offered such as chose to withdraw from his ranks, the liberty of doing so.* This unparalleled event caused great consternation, as well it might, in Reynier's corps; for not only were they weakened, when already inferior in force, by fully eight thousand men, but such was the exasperation of the Saxon cannoneers, that they pointed their guns, immediately after going over, against the French lines, and tore in pieces the ranks of their former comrades by a point-blank discharge. The French general, reduced to the single division Durutte, and threatened on the right by Bubna from the Bohemian army, and on the left by Bulow from that of the Prince-Royal, was immediately compelled to fall back to Sellershausen, almost close to Leipsic. Ney, informed of the catastrophe, hastened to reinforce Reynier by Delmas' division of his own corps; while Marmont, to keep abreast of the retrograde movement in other points, withdrew his troops in a similar degree, with the exception of his extreme left, which still stood firm at Schönfeld.

60. The allied troops, excited to the greatest degree by these favourable circumstances, now pressed forward at all points to encircle the enemy, and force them back, at the point of the bayonet, into the suburbs of Leipsic; while the French, roused to the highest pitch of indignation by the defection of their allies, made the most desperate and heroic resistance. No sooner was Napoleon informed of the defection of the Saxons, and that Schönfeld, almost a suburb of Leipsic, was threatened, than, feeling the vital importance of preserving that city as his only line of retreat, he hastened with the cuirassiers of Nansouty, and a division of the Young Guard, to the

* "Eight days before, the Emperor, while reviewing the Saxon troops, had told them that those who wished no longer to fight for us, were at liberty to quit the service."—BIGNON, xii. 406; ODELEBEN, ii. 24.

menaced point. It was full time that succour should arrive; for when these veterans came up, Durutte and Delmas had been driven back close to the town; the Swedish troops had penetrated to Kuhl-Garten, on the very edge of the walls; while Langeron, furiously assaulting Schönfeld, had three times penetrated into that village, and as often been dislodged by the heroic courage of Marmont's men. Nansouty and the Guards were immediately pushed forward by Durutte in the direction where there was a sort of chasm, filled up only by a cordon of light troops, between the extreme right of the army of Bohemia under Bubna, and the extreme left of the Prince-Royal under Bulow. This powerful corps rapidly made its way, almost unresisted, in at the opening; but before it had advanced far, it was assailed with such vigour on the right by Bubna, and on the left by Bulow, supported by the English rocket brigade, under the able direction of Captain Bogue, that it was forced to retire, after Delmas had been slain, with very heavy loss.* At the same time, Schönfeld was vehemently attacked by Count Langeron, and as gallantly defended by Marmont: five times did the Russians penetrate in with irresistible vigour, and five times were they driven out by the devoted courage of the French. Marmont's aide-de-camp was struck down by his side; General Compans was wounded—General Frederick killed, in this terrible struggle. At length, at six at night, it was carried a sixth time amidst terrific cheers, and remained finally in the hands of the Russians; while four thousand of their bravest soldiers and an equal number of its intrepid de-

fenders lay dead, or weltering in their blood, in its streets.

61. Such was the exhaustion of both parties by the long continuance of this mortal struggle, that neither for the remainder of the day were able to undertake any considerable operations. Gradually, however, and almost insensibly, the Allies gained ground on every side. Bulow, following up his success against Durutte and Nansouty, carried the villages of Stuntz and Sellershausen, and drove the French on the north-east back under the very walls of Leipsic; while Sacken attacked the suburb of Rosenthal, from which he was only repelled by the devoted valour of Dombrowski's Poles and Arrighi's dragoons. But the near approach of the enemy on all sides now made it evident to Napoleon that the position of Leipsic had become untenable, and dispositions were made for a retreat. He had early in the forenoon reinforced Bertrand, at Lindenau, with a considerable part of the reserves at Leipsic; and that general, driving Ghluy before him, had succeeded in opening the road to Weissenfels, so that the principal line of their retreat was secured. Towards evening the carriages and baggage of the army began to defile in that direction; and Blucher, observing the long files of chariots which filled the highway to France, immediately sent intimation to Schwartzenberg that the enemy was about to retreat, and despatched York's corps, which had been kept in reserve during the day, to move upon Halle in order to anticipate his columns upon the left of the Saale.

62. Night came, more terrible even than day after such a conflict; for with it was brought the memory of the past, and the anticipation of the future. To the incessant roll of musketry, and the roar of two thousand cannon, succeeded a silence yet more awful, interrupted only by a casual shot from the sentries as they paced their rounds, and the hollow murmur which, over a field of such vast extent, arose from the cries of the horses and the groans of the

* This was the first occasion that this new and most formidable implement of modern warfare was brought into action. Such was its effect upon the enemy, that a solid square of French infantry, upon the flank of which it opened its fire, surrendered in a few minutes. Hardly was this brilliant success achieved, when the commander of the brigade, Captain Bogue, a noble and patriotic officer, struck on the breast by a cannon-ball, expired. It was first introduced in the Peninsula at the passage of the Adour in February 1814.—*Vide* LONDONDERRY, 172.

wounded. Soon the bivouacs were spread, and the heavens, in the whole circumference of the horizon, were illuminated by the ruddy glow of innumerable watch-fires. Silent and sad, Napoleon's marshals and generals assembled around him. Little was said in the deliberations which succeeded; the position of the enemy, the dreadful circle of bivouac flames which surrounded them, the dead and the dying who environed them on every side, told but too plainly how near and imminent the danger had become. Sorbier and Dulauloy, the commanders of the artillery, were requested to report on the condition of the army's ammunition. They stated that above two hundred thousand cannon-shot had been discharged during the battle, and to renew it was impossible without thirty or forty thousand fresh troops, and some hundred caissons of ammunition. Neither could be obtained; for the last sabre and bayonet had been brought up on the preceding day; the grand park of ammunition had been deposited in Torgau, which was no longer accessible, and Magdeburg and Erfurth were the nearest depots of provisions. During this eventful conference, Napoleon, overcome with fatigue, fell asleep in the chair on which he sat; his hands rested negligently folded on his breast, and his generals, respecting the respite of misfortune, preserved a profound silence. Suddenly, at the end of a quarter of an hour, he awoke, and casting a look of astonishment on the circle which surrounded him, exclaimed—"Am I awake, or is it a dream?" Soon recollecting, however, what had happened, he returned to Leipsic, where he resumed his wonted energy of mind, and spent the remainder of the night in dictating orders to the generals and commanders of fortresses which were to be abandoned. Soon after daybreak, he sent a message to the King of Saxony, announcing his intention to retreat, and leaving it to him either to follow his fortunes, or remain where he was, and conclude a separate peace with the Allies.

63. No words can describe the state

of horror and confusion in which the inhabitants of Leipsic were kept during the whole night which followed the battle. The prodigious multitude of wounded who had been brought in during the day, had filled to overflowing every house it contained; the maimed and the dying were lying without either bandages for their wounds or covering for their bodies, in the streets; while the incessant rolling of artillery waggons and caissons, on every avenue leading to Lindenau, the cries of the drivers, the neighing of the horses as the wheels of the carriages were locked together, and the continued march of the columns, kept every eye open, in that scene of unutterable woe, during the whole night. At eight at night, Napoleon left his bivouac on the Thonberg, and took up his quarters in the Prussian Hotel. His horses were ordered to be ready to start at a moment's notice; but he himself sat up till daylight, with Berthier, Maret, and Caulaincourt, receiving reports and dictating orders. The King of Saxony, amidst the wreck of his fortunes, was chiefly inconsolable on account of the defection of his troops during the battle, and repeatedly requested counsel from Napoleon how he should act in the crisis. But the Emperor had the generosity to leave him altogether unfettered in the course he was to pursue; and more than once expressed his admiration of the constancy of a prince who showed himself the same now, when surrounded by disaster, as when he inscribed on his triumphal arches the words, "To Napoleon, the grateful Frederick Augustus." The parting of the two sovereigns was a noble and touching interview worthy of dramatic representation in future times, for it was the separation of the first in genius from the first in elevated feeling and fidelity in misfortune.

64. Early on the morning of the 19th, the allied generals made preparations for a general attack on Leipsic. By daybreak the French army was in full retreat on all sides. Victor and Augereau, with the whole five corps of cavalry, defiled across the suburb of

Lindenau, and issued forth over the chaussée which traversed the marshes of the Elster. But this was the sole issue for the army: one single bridge over that river was to receive the prodigious concourse of soldiers and carriages; for no orders to form other bridges had been given, excepting one of wood, which speedily gave way under the multitude by which it was thronged. Reynier, with the division Durutte, which alone remained to him, was charged with the defence of the suburb of Rosenthal; Ney withdrew his troops into the eastern suburbs; while the corps of Lauriston, Macdonald, and Poniatowski entered the town and took a position behind the barriers of the south. They were destined to the honourable post of the rear-guard; but, though the two former still numbered twenty-five thousand combatants, the Poles had been reduced, by their two days' bloody fighting on the banks of the Elster, to two thousand seven hundred men.* The total loss of the French army, in the two preceding days, had been fully forty thousand men; but nearly sixty thousand were still in Leipsic, besides an equal number who were defiling on the road to France: the barriers were all strongly palisaded; the adjacent walls and houses loopholed; and such a force, defending house by house the suburbs of the city so strengthened, could certainly, it was hoped, make good the post till the retreat of the ammunition waggons and cannon was effected.

65. No sooner were the allied troops made aware of the preparations in the French army for a retreat, than a universal cry of joy burst from the ranks; the whole army, almost by an involuntary movement, stood to their arms, and loudly demanded to be led on to the assault. The allied sovereigns hastened to profit by this universal burst

of enthusiasm, and their dispositions were promptly made. Sacken advanced against the suburb of Halle, supported by Langeron as a reserve. Bulow prepared to storm the Hinter-Thor and Kuhl-Garten Thor, on the north; Woronzoff was to move against the barrier of Grimma, on the north-east; while Benningsen and the advanced columns of the Grand Army assaulted the Sand, Windmühlen, and Munz barriers, on the east and south. A prodigious multitude of artillery waggons and chariots obstructed the approaches to the town in that direction; and the French troops, lining all the walls, gardens, enclosures, and windows of the suburbs, were evidently preparing for a desperate resistance. On the other hand, the allied columns, flushed with victory and burning with enthusiasm, pushed rapidly forward with inexpressible ardour. The arrangements of Trachenberg had been executed to the letter: gradually and skilfully contracting the circle within which the enemy's movements were circumscribed, they were at length preparing to meet at the appointed rendezvous, in the centre of his camp.

66. Before the assault commenced, a deputation from the magistrates of Leipsic waited on the Emperor Alexander, beseeching him to spare the city the horrors with which it was menaced if it were carried by open force; and, at the same time, a flag of truce arrived from Macdonald, offering to surrender all that remained of the Saxon troops, with the town, if the French garrison were permitted to retire with their artillery unmolested. This proposal, which would in effect have secured the retreat of half the French army, was of course rejected, and the troops moved on to the attack. Meanwhile Napoleon, at ten o'clock, went to pay a farewell visit to the King of Saxony. He was received with the accustomed etiquette, and conducted into the apartment of the Queen, where he remained a quarter of an hour, endeavouring to console the aged monarch in his misfortunes: at length, hearing the rattle of mus-

* "Prince," said Napoleon to Poniatowski, "you will defend the suburb of the south."
—"Sire," replied he, "I have few followers left."
—"What then?" rejoined Napoleon, "you will defend it with what you have?"
—"Ah! Sire," replied the descendant of the Jagellons, "we are all ready to die for your Majesty."—FAIN, ii. 434.

ketry on the side both of Taucha and Grimma, he bade him adieu, and, mounting his horse, set off. In the first instance, he directed his course towards the gate of Ranstadt, which leads into the suburb of Lindenau; but when he arrived there, the crowd of horsemen, carriages, and foot-soldiers was so prodigious, that even the authority of the Emperor's attendants could not clear a passage through them, and he was obliged to retrace his steps. He then returned through the centre of the city, issued on the opposite side by the gate of St Peter, where the bullets were already falling around him, rode round the boulevards, and again reached Ranstadt, by making the entire circuit of the walls. There, however, new dangers awaited him; for the confusion of carriages, artillery, and chariots in the streets of the suburb was such, that to penetrate the mass was impossible; while the rapid approach of the enemy, whose deafening cheers were already heard above the roar of the musketry, rendered the moments precious, and instant escape indispensable. In this extremity, one of the citizens pointed out a lane by which he got into a garden, by the back-door of which he escaped out upon the banks of the Elster, reached the chaussée beyond the suburb, and hastened across the marshes to Lindenau. Had it not been for that casual discovery, he would undoubtedly have been made prisoner.

67. Meanwhile the allied columns were pressing in on all sides; and the tumult in the interior of the city was such, that it was with the utmost difficulty, and only by the most energetic efforts on the part of Poniatowski, Lauriston, and Macdonald, who were charged with the maintenance of the post as long as possible, that any degree of order could be preserved in the defence. Despairing of the possibility of carrying off their innumerable artillery waggons and chariots, the French set fire to three hundred which were in park before the Dresden gate; and the sight of the flames and sound of the explosion, by rendering

it certain that the enemy intended to evacuate the place, redoubled the ardour of the allied troops. The resistance, however, was beyond expectation vigorous. Sacken was twice repulsed from the Halle gate beyond the Partha, and only succeeded at length in forcing his way in by the aid of Langeron's corps, and the sacrifice of almost the whole regiment of Archangel. Still the arch over the Partha and the inner suburb were to be carried; but the Russians crossed the bridge in the face of two heavy guns pouring forth grape-shot, and, rushing down the main street, commenced a murderous warfare with the French, who were firing from the windows and tops of the houses. At the same time an obstinate conflict was going on at the barrier of Hinter-Thor, where Bulow, supported by six Swedish battalions, after a furious conflict, at length forced the gate, and commenced a guerilla warfare with the French at the windows and in the houses. The assailants, however, were now pouring in on all sides, and further resistance was unavailing. Woronzoff, at the head of several Russian battalions, forced the barrier of Grimma; Krassowski stormed that of the Spital; while Benningsen and the advanced guard of the Grand Army carried those of Sand, Windmühlen, and Pegau, looking to the south. On all sides the allied troops poured like a furious torrent into the city—the very steeples shaking with the tumult—bearing down all opposition, and driving before them an enormous mass of soldiers, carriages, artillery, and waggons, which, with the rear-guard everywhere yet bravely fighting, was rolled slowly onwards towards the west, like a huge monster, bleeding at every pore, but still unsubdued.

68. At this dreadful moment the great bridge of Lindenau, the only remaining passage over the Elster, was blown up with a frightful explosion. The corporal charged with the mine which had been run under it by orders of Napoleon, hearing the loud hurrahs on all sides, and seeing some of the enemy's tirailleurs approaching in the

gardens of the suburbs on either hand, naturally conceived that the French troops had all passed and the baggage only remained, and that the time was therefore come to fire the train, in order to stop the pursuit of the Allies. He accordingly applied the match; the arch was blown into the air, and the passage stopped; while the only other bridge over the river, hastily and imperfectly constructed, had shortly before sunk under the weight of the crowds who thronged to it. A shriek of horror, more terrible than even the loudest cries of battle, burst from the dense multitude which crowded to the edge of the chasm, when they found the arch destroyed. The ranks immediately broke; the boldest threw themselves into the river, where a few escaped across, but the greater part perished in the deep and muddy channel. Macdonald by great exertions succeeded in reaching the brink, and, plunging in, swam his horse across and escaped. Poniatowski also reached the side, and spurred his horse on; but the gallant charger, exhausted with fatigue, reeled as he strove to mount the opposite bank, and fell back on his noble rider, who perished in the water. Lauriston, Reynier, and twenty other generals, with fifteen thousand soldiers, were made prisoners; besides twenty-three thousand sick and wounded who lay in the hospitals and private houses. Two hundred and fifty pieces of can-

* The following is the exact proportion in which the total loss was divided between the different powers whose troops were engaged, and it affords a pretty fair criterion of the degree in which the weight of the contest fell upon them respectively:—

	Generals.	Officers.	Non-Com. Officers and Privates.
Russians, . .	18	864	21,740
Prussians, . .	3	520	14,950
Austrians, . .	1	899	8,000
Swedes, . . .	..	10	300
	21	1793	44,990
			1,793
			21
			46,804

—KAUSLER, 952; and *Die Grosse Chronik*, i. 937.

Great part of the French military writers, following the example of Napoleon's official account in the *Moniteur*, have ascribed the catastrophe of the 19th entirely to the acci-

don, nine hundred chariots and ammunition waggons, an incalculable quantity of baggage, the King of Saxony, two generals of corps, seven generals of divisions, twelve of brigade, and thirty thousand other prisoners, independent of the wounded, constituted the trophies, during the three days, of a battle in which the total loss of the French was upwards of sixty thousand men. The loss of the Allies was also immense; it amounted to eighteen hundred officers, and forty-five thousand private soldiers, killed and wounded, in the three days' combat: a prodigious sacrifice, but one which, great as it was, humanity has no cause to regret, for it delivered Europe from French bondage, and the world from revolutionary aggression.*

69. At two o'clock the carnage ceased at all points; the rattle of musketry was no longer heard, and a distant roar in all directions alone indicated that the waves of this terrible tempest were gradually sinking to rest. But what pen can paint the scene which the interior of the city now exhibited? Grouped together in wild confusion, lay piles of the dead and heaps of the dying; overturned artillery caissons, broken guns, pillaged baggage waggons, and dejected prisoners, were to be seen beside the exulting bands of the victors, who in admirable order forced their way through the throng, and, amidst cheers that made the very

dental blowing up of the bridge by the corporal on guard, before the prescribed time. It is evident, however, that a single bridge could never have permitted so vast a mass as fifteen thousand soldiers, two hundred and fifty guns, and eight hundred chariots, to defile across in less than an hour, especially when the enemy were pressing the rear of the mass vigorously on all sides; and in the confusion of such a multitude of stragglers to get forward, with the musketry and cheers of the victors approaching on all sides, the passage would necessarily bespeedily choked. This is, accordingly, admitted by the more judicious of the eyewitnesses in the French ranks:—"Besides, those who were obstructed in the passage would in like manner have fallen into the hands of the enemy. In this accident, the impossibility of escape otherwise than by the narrow passage of a single bridge, would have equally placed them in the power of the Allies, who had every facility for crossing the Elster at other points."—ODELBEN, *Témoign Oculaire*, ii. 41.

welkin ring, moved steadily forward towards the principal square of the city. On the side of the suburb of Markrannstädt, in particular, the frightful accumulation of wounded fugitives, and as yet unwounded but captive warriors, recalled the awful scene of the passage of the Beresina. Amidst this unparalleled scene, the allied sovereigns, at the head of their respective troops, made their entrance into the city. The Emperors of Russia and Austria, with the King of Prussia, surrounded by their illustrious generals and brilliant staffs, came

by the barriers on the south, the Prince-Royal of Sweden by those on the east, and all met in the great square. At this heart-stirring sight, the enthusiasm of the people knew no bounds: all felt as if themselves and all dear to them had escaped from death. The city resounded with acclamations; handkerchiefs waved from every window, merry chimes rang from every steeple; while tears, more eloquent than words, rolling over almost every cheek, told that the tyrant was struck down, and Germany delivered.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

DELIVERANCE OF GERMANY.

1. WHILE these scenes, outstripping even the splendour of oriental conception, were passing in the city of Leipsic, the French army, sad, disorganised, and dejected, was wending its way towards Markrannstädt. The Emperor, after passing the last bridge, that of the mill of Lindenau, ascended to the first floor of the windmill to examine the state of the army; but there his exhaustion was such that he fell asleep, and slept profoundly for some time, amidst the distant roar of the cannon at Leipsic, and the din of horsemen, guns, and foot-soldiers, who hurried in a tumultuous torrent past the base of the edifice. Wakened by the explosion of the bridge on the other side of the marshes, he hastily arranged some guns in battery, to guard against an immediate attack; but, finding he was not pursued, and having learned the real nature of the catastrophe, he continued his course more leisurely to Markrannstädt, where the whole Guard had already arrived. There headquarters were established for the

night. But it was soon apparent how much the fatigues and calamities they had undergone had weakened the authority of the Emperor, and dissolved the discipline of the army. The troops, with feelings embittered by misfortune, marched in sullen and moody desperation. No cheers were heard on the approach of the Emperor: pillage and rapine were universal: the bonds of discipline, even in the Guard itself, were relaxed; and the officers appeared to have lost at once the power and the inclination to stop the disorder which generally prevailed.

2. On the side of the Allies, a very considerable dislocation of the immense force which had combated at Leipsic immediately took place. Bernadotte with the Swedes, and a considerable part of his army, as well as Benningsen's force, moved towards Hamburg, where the presence of Davoust, with a powerful corps, both required observation and promised an important acquisition. Klenau was detached towards Dresden, to aid in

the blockade of St Cyr, who, with thirty-five thousand men, was now altogether cut off, and might be expected speedily to surrender. Blücher, with the corps of Langeron and Sacken, moved after the French on the great road to Mayence, and reached Schkeuditz the same night. York was advanced to Halle, and Giulay with his Austrians marched on Pegau; but the great body of the allied army, worn out with its toils, remained in the neighbourhood of Leipsic. These movements, and in particular the speedy removal of Bernadotte from the headquarters of the allied sovereigns to a separate, but yet important command, were recommended not less by their military importance than by political considerations of yet greater weight. The Grand Alliance, though hitherto faithful to itself, and prosperous beyond what the most sanguine could have anticipated, was composed of materials which, when the pressure of common danger was removed, could hardly be expected to draw cordially together. Bernadotte, in particular, could not be an object of very warm interest to the Emperor Francis, by whom his conduct at Vienna, fourteen years before, when ambassador of the Directory, was far from being forgotten [*ante*, Chap. xxv. § 138]; his backwardness, especially in the employment of the Swedish troops, during the whole campaign, was well known at headquarters; and he himself, as he admits, felt that he was in a false position, and that he would be better at a distance from the scene of French carnage and humiliation.*

3. The funeral of Prince Poniatowski terminated the last scene of this bloody drama. Victors and vanquished vied with each other in striving to do honour to the hero, who, faithful to his country and his oaths, exhibited, amidst the general defection of Eu-

rope, the glorious example of unconquerable firmness and unshaken fidelity. After bravely combating at the head of his heroic but wasted band of followers, in the suburbs of Leipsic, to retard the advance of the Allies, he was retiring to the banks of the Pleisse, still keeping up a desperate resistance, when an explosion was heard, and the cry arose that the bridge was blown up. "Gentlemen," said he to the officers around him, drawing his sword, "it now behoves us to die with honour." At the head of this gallant band he made his way, though severely wounded, through a column of the Allies which strove to intercept his retreat, and reached the banks of the Pleisse, which he succeeded in passing by dismounting from his horse. Exhausted with fatigue and loss of blood he mounted another, and, seeing no other possibility of escape, plunged into the deep stream of the Elster, and by great exertions reached the other side. In striving, however, to mount the opposite bank, the hind feet of the horse became entangled in the mud; it fell backward, and the exhausted chief sank to rise no more. His funeral was celebrated with extraordinary pomp by the allied sovereigns, who hastened to do honour to a warrior whose military career had been unsullied, and who, in the last extremity, preferred death to surrender. But a still more touching testimony to his worth was borne by the tears of the Poles, who crowded round his bier, and anxiously strove to touch the pall which covered the remains of the last remnant of their royal line, and the last hope of their national independence.

4. On the day following his dreadful defeat, Napoleon arrived at Weissenfels. In passing over the plain of Lützen, the soldiers cast a melancholy look on the theatre of their former glory, and many shed tears at the sad reverse of which it exhibited so striking a monument. What had availed them the efforts made, the sacrifices endured, the blood shed, since that heroic combat had been maintained? Where were now the young hearts which then beat high, the glittering

* "The Prince-Royal lost no time in quitting Leipsic, and moved in the direction of Hamburg. The fact is, that at Leipsic he was in a false position. The sight of every dead body, of every wounded man, of every French prisoner, awakened in his breast the most cruel feelings."—*Mémoires de CHARLES JEAN*, ii. 100.

hopes that were then formed, the ardent visions which then floated before them "in life's morning march, when their bosoms were young!" Before the blood-stained environs of Kais and Starsiedel, defiled, in wild confusion, the tumultuous array of a beaten, dejected, and half-famished army: three-fourths of those who there had fought so bravely for the independence of France had since perished, or were now captives; the few that remained, more like a funeral procession than a warlike array, passed on pensive and silent; they envied the lot of those who had fallen, for they would not witness the degradation of France.

"The boast of chivalry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,

Await alike the inevitable hour—
The paths of glory lead but to the grave!"

The Old Guard halted at Rippach, near the spot where Bessières had been slain the day before the battle of Lützen; and there Napoleon experienced a momentary gratification in seeing a column of five thousand Austrian prisoners, with all the standards taken at Dresden, defile before him.

5. But this enjoyment was of short duration. As the corps and regiments, in utter disorder and for the most part mingled together, crowded past, it became painfully evident that all the Germans had left their colours; several even of the Polish regiments had passed over to the enemy; of Poniatowski's followers, none but six hundred foot-soldiers and fifteen hundred horsemen remained, and they had engaged to abide by the Emperor's standards only for eight days more. Already the Allies were pressing the rear of the army. Sacken's cavalry, under Wassilchikoff, had made two thousand prisoners: and the great road being cut off by Giulay, who from Pegau had moved on Naumburg, it became necessary to throw bridges over the Saale, in order to gain, by a cross march, the other highway at Freiburg. Such was the emotion of Bertrand, who received the Emperor at Weissenfels, and there first became acquainted, from the confusion of the

columns, with the magnitude of the disaster that had been sustained, that he shed tears, and openly besought him to hasten forward, even if it were alone, to Erfurth and Mayence, and preserve in his person the fortunes of France.

6. On the day following, the retreat was continued in the direction of Freiburg; but as they could not reach that place, the Emperor passed the night in a cabin on the roadside, only nine feet square. Blucher and Sacken, continuing the pursuit, arrived the same day at Weissenfels, and immediately set about the construction of new bridges in lieu of the wooden ones over which the French had passed, which had been destroyed. Burning with anxiety to overtake the enemy, the Prussian hussars pushed on the moment the passage was practicable, and came up with them at the passage of the Unstrut at Freiburg, where, after a sharp conflict, the rear-guard was overthrown, with the loss of a thousand prisoners, eighteen guns, and an immense quantity of ammunition and baggage. On the same day, Giulay had a more serious affair with the enemy at the defile of Kösen. That position, which is extremely strong towards Naumburg, offers scarcely any obstacles to an enemy advancing from the left of the Saale. Bertrand, accordingly, without difficulty dislodged the enemy from it; and once master of the defile, its strength in the other direction enabled him easily to maintain himself in it against the repeated attacks of the Austrian corps. The passage of the Unstrut at Freiburg, however, evinced in striking colours the disorganised state of the army. Such was the accumulation of cannon and chariots on the opposite hill, that Napoleon's carriages were unable to get through, and he himself was obliged to alight, and make his way on foot, which he did with extreme difficulty, through the throng. When the enemy's guns began to play on the dense mass, the most frightful disorder ensued; every one rushed headlong towards the bridges, and the bullets began to whistle over the head of

Napoleon himself. Finding that he could no longer be of any service, he calmly turned aside the favourite bay horse which he had mounted, and, penetrating through several narrow and difficult defiles, reached Eckartsberg, the scene of Davoust's triumph at the battle of Auerstadt some years before, where he passed the night in the same house from whence, six months before, he had set out, full of hope, to try his fortune at the head of a brilliant host on the Saxon plains. Through the whole night, the army, like a furious torrent, never ceased to roll along in wild confusion, and with dissonant cries, under the windows of the apartment in which the Emperor slept, where all was still and mournful as the grave.

7. During these days, the greater part of the allied army marched by the main road through Naumburg and Jena; and, passing Weimar, took post on the road to Erfurth, near Nohra, while the army of the Prince-Royal continued its march by Merseburg, in the direction of Cassel. In this way, the latter repeated exactly the pursuit of the Grand Army by Kutusoff, on the parallel line of march from Malo-Jaroslawitz to Kraanoi; and, contenting themselves with harassing the rear of the French army by the army of Silesia, compelled them, by this able disposition, to recoil on the wasted line of their former advance. On the 22d, the French retreated with such expedition over the great plains which stretched from the neighbourhood of Eckartsberg to Erfurth, that even the Cossacks were unable to overtake them; and on the following day they reached the latter town, where fortified citadels gave a feeling of security to the army, while the distribution of provisions from extensive magazines assuaged the pangs of hunger which were now so severely felt. Murat there quitted Napoleon, and bent his course towards his own dominions. The pretext assigned for this departure was threatened disturbances in his kingdom, and the necessity of providing for its defence amid the dangers with which Italy would

soon be menaced. But though these reasons were plausible, and not altogether without foundation, his real motives were very different. A secret correspondence had commenced with Metternich: and the King of Naples, in the hope of preserving his crown in the general wreck, was preparing to abandon his brother-in-law and benefactor. Napoleon, who, ever since his desertion of his post on the Vistula in the preceding spring, had watched his proceedings with a jealous eye, had no difficulty in divining his real motives. But he dissembled these feelings, and embraced his old companion in arms, as he parted with him, with a melancholy presentiment, which was too fatally realised, that he would never see him again. His last words to him were, "Remember always that you are a French prince."

8. Napoleon passed two days at Erfurth, entirely engrossed in the labours of the cabinet. There he composed and sent off his famous bulletin, giving the account of the battle of Leipzig; from the place, and the very hotel where, five years before, during the conferences with the Emperor Alexander, his fortunes had attained their highest elevation [*ante*, Chap. LV. § 5], he now was doomed to date the narrative of his decisive overthrow. These two days' rest had a surprising effect in restoring the spirit and rectifying the disorders of the army; and then might be seen the clearest proof how much the rapid diminution which, since hostilities recommenced, the French army had undergone, had been owing to the almost total want of magazines of provisions for their subsistence, and the consequent necessity of individual pillage: all the effects of the atrocious revolutionary maxim, that war should maintain war. So indignant was the Emperor at this result of physical privations, which he never felt himself, that on witnessing the effect of the magazines of Erfurth in restoring order, he said to the officers around, "Now, only see what a set they are; they are going to the devil. I shall lose eighty thousand men from this to the Rhine in this manner."

But even in this moment, when his beaten and dissolving army was only held together by the temporary supply of the magazines which they passed on their march, he was dreaming of fresh projects of conquest, and said repeatedly, "From hence to the Rhine; in spring I shall have two hundred and fifty thousand combatants." He was perfectly calm and collected in his manner, however; firm and unshaken in his views; and heard with equanimity all that was addressed to him, even on the necessity of making peace with the Allies; the subject of all others the most repugnant to his secret thoughts.

9. The army underwent a great change of composition during its brief sojourn at Erfurth, eminently descriptive of the awful catastrophes which had recently thinned its ranks. All that remained were formed into six corps,* the sad remains of thirteen which, when the armistice terminated, followed the standards of the Emperor. Three whole corps, viz. those of Lauriston, Reynier, and Poniatowski, had disappeared during the catastrophe of Leipsic, and were never heard of again in the French army. Oudinot's had been dissolved after the disaster of Dennewitz; two, St Cyr's and Vandamme's, had been left in Dresden; Davoust was in Hamburg, with detachments in Torgau and Magdeburg, and Rapp still held the ramparts of Dantzic. Above a hundred and ten thousand men were left to their fate in the garrisons on the Elbe; in Magdeburg alone there were thirty thousand; in Hamburg twenty-five; in Dresden thirty-five; in Torgau fourteen thousand. The garrisons of these places had been swelled to these enormous amounts by the multitude of stragglers, sick and wounded men, who sought a refuge within their walls after the retreat of the Grand Army from the Elbe. But they proved rather a burden than an advantage to their garrisons, for they brought with them physical contagion and mental depression, from the miseries and privations

of the campaign, and augmented the number of mouths, which pressed upon the now straitened supplies of provisions. The whole force which the Emperor brought with him from Erfurth towards the Rhine was under ninety thousand men; while twice that number were left blockaded in the fortresses on the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula; a most extraordinary and unparalleled result of the campaign, and saying little for the general plan of operations which he had adopted.

10. The stay of the Emperor at Erfurth, short as it was, filled the citizens, most of whom had been reduced to destitution by the continued exactions of the French army, with the utmost anxiety; for they were afraid that, to complete their miseries, they were to be involved in the horrors of a siege. It was necessary, however, from the dilapidated state of the artillery, and the disorganised condition of his troops, which alone dictated this stoppage; and no sooner were the guns and caissons replenished from the magazines of Erfurth, and the troops partially fed and arranged in different corps, than the army resumed its march for the Rhine, and on the same day reached Gotha. Blücher, with unwearied activity followed on its traces, and not only collected all the abandoned guns and captured the stragglers, but attacked and defeated the rear-guard near that town, with the loss of two thousand prisoners. The grand allied army, with the headquarters of the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, followed through the Thuringian forest; but so rapid was the retreat of the French towards the Rhine, that they were unable to keep pace with them, and beyond that woody region the task of pursuing the retiring columns was devolved on the Cossacks.

11. These formidable light troops, however, under their renowned leaders, Platoff, Orloff Denisoff, Chernicheff, and Kowalski, continued the pursuit with indefatigable perseverance. Not only were all foraging parties on either side of the road cut off, but the whole stragglers were made prisoners,

* Commanded by Victor, Ney, Bertrand, Marmont, Augereau, and Macdonald.

and a vast quantity of abandoned guns and ammunition was collected at every step. The certainty of being made prisoners had no effect in deterring a large part of the army from straggling. Such were the pangs they underwent from hunger, that they were often glad of a pretence for yielding themselves to the enemy for the sake of momentary relief; and the woods, for some leagues, were filled with isolated men, great part of whom sank, from pure exhaustion, into the arms of death. With the exception of the frost and snow, the retiring army presented the same appearances as in the Russian retreat. Desertion prevailed to a frightful extent, especially among the few troops of the Rhenish Confederacy which still adhered to the fortunes of Napoleon; the road was strewn, the ditches on either side filled, with the dead bodies of men and horses who had dropped down from the effects of fatigue and famine; and so rapid was the process of dissolution in the whole army, that it was hard to say, in the last days of the retreat, whether it was not melting away as fast as the host which retreated from Moscow had done under the severity of the Russian winter.

12. While Napoleon, however, was thus making by rapid strides for the Rhine, a new and unexpected enemy was arising in that quarter, who threatened to intercept his retreat, and renew on the banks of the Main the horrors of the Beresina. Bavaria, though the last to join the alliance, had taken the most decisive steps to demonstrate her sincerity in the cause which she had newly espoused. No sooner were the cabinet of Munich relieved, by the march of Augereau for Leipsic, of the apprehensions excited by the presence of his corps near their frontier at Würzburg, than they yielded, as already mentioned, to the solicitations of the Allies, and concluded a peace with the cabinet of Vienna on the 8th October, in virtue of which Bavaria acceded to the Grand Alliance. Military operations of the highest importance immediately followed this diplomatic conversion. The Bavarian

army, under Marshal Wrede, which was stationed at Braunau, opposite to the Austrian corps under the Prince of Reuss, joined itself to the latter force, and both united set out in the middle of October in the direction of Frankfort on the Main, under the command of Wrede. The whole consisted of three divisions of Bavarian infantry, with two brigades of cavalry of that state, and two divisions of Austrian infantry and one of cavalry; and numbered fifty-six thousand combatants, with one hundred and sixteen guns. On the 19th they passed the Danube at Döнауwerth, and Wrede marched with such expedition, that on the 27th headquarters were at Aschaffenburg, from whence he detached ten thousand men to Frankfort; and on the 29th he took post in the forest of HANAU, stationing his troops across the great road, and blocking up entirely the retreat of the French army to Mayence.

13. The forces which Napoleon brought back with him were much more considerable in point of numerical amount; but a large party of them were so completely disorganised and depressed by the privations they had undergone during their retreat, that the contest between the two armies could not be said to be unequal. Nearly ninety thousand men had set out around his standards from Erfurth; but ten thousand had strayed from their colours, or been made prisoners in the subsequent forced marches; and when the army approached the Main, it did not number above eighty thousand men. Fully thirty thousand of these, also, were either stragglers, or so far in the rear as to be of no value in the shock which was approaching; so that, to clear his passage, Napoleon could not rely upon more than fifty thousand men; and his once magnificent artillery of eight hundred pieces was reduced to two hundred guns. They were, for the most part, however, the artillery of the Guard, second to none in Europe for vigour and efficiency; and the troops, aware of their danger, ardently desirous to get back to France, and perfectly sensible that no other way remained but what they

could win at their swords' point, might be expected to fight with the courage of despair. The Guards, moreover, upon whom the weight of the contest was likely to fall, had suffered comparatively little in the late disasters; and Bertrand's corps had been an entire stranger to the losses of the last two days' combat at Leipsic. The Emperor, therefore, who had slept on the 29th at Langensfeld, the chateau of the Prince of Isenberg, no sooner heard that the road to Mayence was blocked up by the Bavarian troops, than he made his dispositions for an attack.

14. Wrede, who had driven the garrison of Würzburg into the citadel, and so secured the passage of that important post on the 27th, reached Hanau with his advanced guard on the 28th, and on the day following brought up the bulk of his forces to that town, and, stretching his line across the high road leading to Frankfort and Mayence, entirely stopped the way. His advanced guard soon came into communication with the Cossacks of Chernicheff and Orloff Denisoff, the vanguard of the allied grand army which hovered round the outskirts of the French host. No sooner was the junction formed, than the Bavarian general arranged his troops in order of battle; and the position which they occupied was so peculiar, as to be entirely different from any which had formed the theatre of combat since the commencement of the revolutionary war. The allied army stood in front of Hanau, at the point where the great road from Erfurth to Frankfort emerges from a thick forest, five miles broad, through which it passes into the open plain,—the right wing resting on the Kinzig, the left being in echelon on the great road. Sixty pieces of cannon were planted in the centre between the Lamboi bridge, over the Kinzig, and the great road, to play on the advancing columns of the enemy when they attempted to debouch from the forest. The vanguard was posted at Ruckingen, with orders to retire from that post as soon as it was seriously attacked, and fall back to the main body of the army, which was drawn up

across the great road in the plain which lies between the town of Hanau and the forest of Lamboi. A large body of light troops occupied the forest to retard the advance of the enemy. That great tract of wood extends for above two leagues in breadth towards Erfurth, and is composed of old oaks, many of them as large as those in Windsor Forest, whose aged stems at times rise out of close thickets of underwood, at others, overshadow with their spreading boughs beautiful vistas of green sward, where numerous herds of swine feed on the acorns; realising thus, in the days of Napoleon, that scene of primitive nature in northern Europe, in the time of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, over which modern genius has thrown so enchanting a light.*

15. The position which the allied army thus occupied, resembled, in a military point of view, that held by Moreau at the western side of the forest of Hohenlinden; and if Wrede had been in sufficient strength to keep his ground in front of the issues from the wood, and hinder the enemy from deploying, at the same time that a division was thrown across the thickets, on the flank of the advancing columns, as that of Richemont was at Hohenlinden, he might possibly have realised the brilliant success of the great republican general on that memorable spot [*ante*, Chap. xxxii. § 29]. But his army was not sufficient in strength to effect such an object. It originally consisted of twenty-three thousand six hundred Austrians, and thirty-one thousand two hundred Bavarians, in all fifty-four thousand eight hundred. But after deducting three battalions left to blockade the citadel of Würzburg, and ten thousand imprudently detached to Frankfort, he could not bring forty-five thousand men into the field; and, with such a force, it was impossible to expect that the retreat of eighty thousand combatants, with two hundred pieces of cannon, fighting with the courage of despair, could be arrested, the more especially when the head of the columns was composed of the Old and Young Guard. Nor was

* The opening forest-scene in *Ivanhoe*.

the position of the Allies exempt from peril; for, if they were defeated, and the French army was in a condition to follow up its successes, they ran the risk of being thrown back upon the Main, and destroyed by superior forces, in attempting to make their way across that broad and deep river.

16. At eleven o'clock on the forenoon of the 30th the battle commenced. The French columns, preceded by a cloud of tirailleurs, advanced in dense masses through the wood, the artillery following the great road, the light troops spread out in the thickets and greensward on either side; and soon a warm fire began among the trees. The dark recesses of the wood were illuminated by the frequent flashes of the musketry: the verdant alleys were hastily traversed by files of armed men, and the action began like a magnificent hunting party in the forest of Fontainebleau. Victor's and Macdonald's corps, now reduced to five thousand combatants, headed the advance, and with some difficulty made their way, fighting as they penetrated through the wood, to the plain beyond it; but when they came there and endeavoured to deploy on its south-western skirts, they were crushed by the concentric fire of seventy pieces of cannon, which stood before the allied line. For four hours the French army was unable to clear its way through the narrow plain which lay between the forest and the banks of the Kinzig. During this period, however, the Guards and main body of the army had time to come up; and Napoleon, now seriously disquieted for his line of retreat, immediately ordered a general attack on the enemy. General Curial, with two battalions of the Old Guard, dispersed as tirailleurs, were brought forward to the front, and began to engage the Bavarian sharpshooters. The hardy veterans soon gained ground, and won not only the issues of the forest, but part of the little plain sprinkled with oaks which lay beyond; and to the space thus won, the artillery of the Guard, under Drouot, was immediately brought forward.

17. This admirable officer commenced his fire with fifteen guns; but they were gradually augmented, as others came up, to fifty, and soon acquired a decided superiority over the batteries of the enemy, whose artillery, though more numerous, returned the fire feebly, from an apprehension of exhausting their ammunition, the reserves of which had not yet come up from Aschaffenburg. Under cover of Drouot's terrible fire, Nansouty and Sebastiani debouched with the cavalry of the Guard, which had suffered less than any other part of the army in the preceding actions, and by a vigorous charge overthrew everything that was opposed to them. Wrede, seeing his danger, collected his cavalry, and the Bavarian horse and squares endeavoured to rally behind Chernicheff's Cossacks; but although the Russian dragoons combated bravely, they were unable to withstand the thundering charges of the French cuirassiers, and the point-blank fire of the artillery of the Guard. Ere long the whole left wing of the Allies gave way and fled towards the Kinzig, leaving the plain between the river and the wood, and the road to Frankfort, open to the enemy. As a last resource, the Bavarian general made an effort with the whole resources he could collect; but Napoleon quickly pushed forward two battalions of the Old Guard, who arrested his advance; and Wrede, despairing of success, withdrew the shattered remains of his army behind the Kinzig, under protection of the cannon of Hanau.

18. While this vehement conflict was going on at the entrance of the wood, Napoleon himself, in the depths of the forest, was a prey to the most anxious solicitude. Fresh troops were continually coming up from the rear; but the highway and alleys through the forest were already blocked up with carriages and cannon; and the increasing multitude, when no issue could be obtained, only augmented the confusion and embarrassment in its wooded recesses. The Emperor, unquiet and anxious, was meanwhile walking backwards and forwards on

the highway, near the bend which the road makes, conversing with Caulaincourt. A bomb fell near them in a ditch bordering the highway: the latter immediately placed himself between the Emperor and the danger, and they continued their conversation as if nothing had occurred. The attendants of Napoleon hardly ventured to draw their breath; but the bomb had sunk so deep in the ditch, that it was prevented from bursting. Meanwhile the forest on all sides resounded with the echoes of artillery. The eye sought in vain to measure its depths, even with the aid of the bright flashes which illuminated their gloom; the crash of the cannon-balls was heard with frightful violence on the gnarled branches of the oaks; and not a few of the French were killed by the fall of the huge arms which had been torn from the sides of these venerable patriarchs of the forest by the violent strokes. When Wrede's last and desperate onset was made on the French left, in particular, the combatants approached so near that their cries were distinctly heard, and the tops of the trees were violently agitated, as in a hurricane, by the bullets which whistled through their branches. The repulse of that attack by the infantry of the Old Guard removed, indeed, the danger, and opened the road to Frankfort; but the Emperor, notwithstanding, did not march on with the advanced guard, but spent the night in the forest, beside a blazing watchfire under the oaks, where next morning he received a deputation from the magistrates of Hanau, who came to beseech him to spare their city the horrors of an assault.*

19. During the night after the battle, the French army defiled without intermission on the great road by

* The field of battle at Hanau is one of the most interesting of the many spots on the continent of Europe to which the exploits of Napoleon have given durable celebrity, as well from the circumstance of its having been the theatre of the last of his German conflicts, as from the extraordinary and romantic character of the old forest where the severest part of the action took place. When the author visited this spot, in 1816, the marks of the then recent conflict were every-

where conspicuous on the huge trunks and gnarled branches of the oaks, many of which were cleft asunder or torn off their stems by the cannon-shot; while the naturally picturesque appearance of the decaying masses was singularly increased by the cavities made by the howitzers and balls, which were in many cases sunk into the wood, and the ruined aspect of the broken branches, half overgrown with underwood, which encumbered its grassy glades.

Wilhelmstadt, from whence it moved by Höchstadt on Frankfort. But though the Guards and principal part of the army were thus placed beyond the reach of danger, it was not so easy a matter to say how the rear-guard, and the numerous stragglers who followed its columns, were to be brought through the perilous pass between the forest and the river. Late on the evening of the 30th, the rear-guard, under Mortier, was still at Glenhausen, on the other side of the forest; and, in order to protect his retreat, Marmont was left before Hanau, with a considerable part of the army. At two in the morning of the 31st he began to bombard the town, and with such effect that it was evacuated early in the forenoon by the Austrian garrison, and immediately taken possession of by the French forces. No sooner was this *point d'appui* secured on the other side of the Kinzig, than Marmont attacked the right of the Allies posted behind the road to Aschaffenburg, and with such impetuosity, that it was forced to give way, and thrown back in disorder on the Main, where it must inevitably have been destroyed, if the Guards and cuirassiers of the French army had been at hand to support the advantage.

20. They had, however, meanwhile passed on towards Frankfort; and Marmont, in consequence, solicitous only to secure the passage of the rear-guard of Mortier, paused in the career of success, and at two in the afternoon fell back towards Hanau, followed by Wrede, who, stung to the quick by the disaster he had experienced, himself led on his forces, and stormed that town at the head of his troops. In pursuing, however, the Italian rear-guard towards the Kinzig, he received a severe wound, which obliged him to

relinquish the command. At the same time, another column of the Allies drove the French over the bridge of Lamboi; but, pursuing their advantage too warmly in the plain in front of the forest, they were attacked in flank by a French column issuing from the woods, and driven back with great loss. These checks, and the wound of Wrede, rendered General Tresnel, who succeeded him in the command, more circumspect. Relinquishing, therefore, all hope of inflicting further injury on the retreating army, he withdrew his troops behind the Kinzig, and Marmont continued his retreat to Frankfort, where the same night he was joined by Mortier with the rear-guard. That marshal having heard an exaggerated account of the losses of the army on the day before, had, by marching all the preceding night by Langensfeld, succeeded by a circuitous route in avoiding the scene of danger. Napoleon was, with reason, to the last degree indignant at the defection of Bavaria, which had brought him to such straits, and he expressed this soon after at the Tuileries, in no measured terms, to M. d'Argenteau. "The King of Bavaria," said he, "has been guilty of a base treachery. He wished to gain possession of the keys of France for my enemies. What need had Bavaria of the keys of France? It is the kick of the ass's foot: but let him beware; the lion is not dead. I have just returned from killing Wrede and passing over the Bavarian army. The King of Bavaria shall see me again next year, and he will not soon forget it. He was a little prince whom I made great: he is a great prince whom I shall make little."^{*}

21. The battle of Hanau cost the Allies ten thousand men, of whom four thousand were prisoners; and the French lost seven thousand, of whom three thousand were wounded and left in the forest, from want of carriages to convey them away. The road to

Frankfort from the field of battle resembled an immense wreck, being strewn with ammunition waggons, broken-down guns, dead horses, and and wounded men, who were abandoned in the precipitate retreat of the French army. Napoleon left that city on the 1st November: soon the red domes and steeples of Mayence appeared in view; the army defiled in mournful silence over the long bridge which it had so often passed in the pride of anticipated victory. The Emperor remained six days in that stronghold, to collect the ruined remains of his vast army, and then set out for Paris, where he arrived on the 9th. Meanwhile the French eagles bade a FINAL ADIEU TO THE GERMAN PLAINS, the theatre of their glories, of their crimes, and of their punishment.

22. The battle of Hanau was a dignified termination to the exploits of the French revolutionary army beyond the Rhine, and threw a parting ray of glory over their long and successful career. Its lustre belongs in an especial manner to the Imperial Guard, by whom the victory was almost exclusively gained; and certainly no troops could, under circumstances of greater difficulty and depression, have achieved a more glorious triumph. When we reflect that the soldiers who, after sharing in the dangers, and witnessing the disasters, of the greatest battle recorded in history, were obliged to toil for above two hundred miles through a wearisome and disastrous retreat, suddenly found themselves, at its close, assailed by a fresh army, superior to that which at the moment they could array against it, and which entirely blocked up their only line of retreat—we must admit that, equally with the discipline and resolution of the Guard during the Russian retreat, their victory on this occasion demonstrates the unconquerable firmness of those iron bands, whom the training and victories of Napoleon had nursed up to be at once the glory, the terror, and the scourge of Europe.

23. It throws a clear and important light upon the wisdom of Kutusoff in not attempting to stop the Imperial

^{*}The authenticity of this remarkable speech is placed beyond a doubt by many concurring witnesses.—See MERRY D'ARGENTEAU, *Notice Historique*, 48, 49; and BIGNON, xii. 423.

Guard at Krasnoi [*ante*, Chap. LXXIII. § 68] and contenting himself with the lesser but safer advantage of passing the succeeding columns under the edge of the sword; and on the injustice of the clamour which has been raised against Tchichagoff, because with less than thirty thousand men, and a hundred and fifty guns, he did not succeed in stopping Napoleon at the Beresina, who had forty thousand efficient combatants, independent of as many stragglers, and two hundred and fifty guns, at his disposal [*ante*, Chap. LXXIII. § 86]. In truth, the success of the French at the Beresina, of the Russians at Culm, of the English at Corunna, and of Napoleon at Hanau, demonstrates the truth of the old adage, that it is in general well to make a bridge of gold for a flying enemy. Nothing is often more fallacious, in such a case, than to judge of the prostration of the strength of an army by the number of its stragglers, the disorder of its columns, the wreck of guns and ammunition waggons which marks its course, or the languor with which it resists when attacked by the *pursuing* enemy. All these are the beginning of ruin, but they are not ruin itself; as much as it is weakened *in rear* in conflict with the pursuing enemy, is it strengthened in front by the multitudes constantly increasing who successively come up. If their retreat is threatened, and the necessity of opening a passage at the sword's point becomes evident to every capacity, it is surprising how soon order will be resumed under the pressure of impending danger, and a desperate valour will compensate the loss of the largest amount of material resources.

24. While the sad remains of the French army were retiring across the Rhine, the allied troops followed closely on their footsteps; and the forces of central and eastern Europe poured in prodigious strength down the valley of the Main. On the 4th November the advanced guards, under Prince Schwartzberg, entered Frankfurt; and on the same day the headquarters of the allied sovereigns reached As-

chaffenburg. On the day following, Alexander made his entry into Frankfurt at the head of twenty thousand horse, amidst the universal transports of the inhabitants; and the Imperial headquarters were fixed there, till preparations could be made for the arduous undertaking of crossing the Rhine, and carrying the war into the heart of France. At the same time their forces on all sides rapidly approached that frontierstream. Schwartzberg forced the passage of the Nidda, and advanced to Höchst, within two leagues of Mayence; while Blücher, on his right, approached the Rhine, and fixed his headquarters at Giessen. A few days after, Giulay received instructions to attack Hochheim, a small town fortified with five redoubts, which stands a little in advance of the *tête-de-pont* of Mayence at Cassel, and was garrisoned by six thousand men, under Guilleminot, supported by Morand with an equal force. So formidable, however, were the columns which the Allies had destined for its assault—consisting of Giulay's column, which attacked the town itself, while Prince Alois of Lichtenstein turned its right, and threatened its communication with the Rhine—that the place was speedily carried, and the French were driven, with the loss of three hundred prisoners, into the *tête-de-pont* of Cassel, the last fortified post in that quarter which they possessed on the right bank of the Rhine.

25. This combat was the last of the campaign, so far as the grand armies on either side were concerned. Exhausted with a contest of such unexampled fatigue and vehemence, both commanders put their forces into winter quarters. Those of Napoleon, entirely on the left bank of the Rhine, extended from Cologne on the north, to Strassburg on the south; but the bulk of his forces were stationed at Mayence, Coblenz, and opposite to the centre of the allied forces around Frankfurt. Their appearance on crossing the bridge of Mayence, so often the scene of their triumphant entry into Germany, was melancholy in the extreme. During two days that the

passage lasted, the bridge and the town, says an eyewitness, resembled less the headquarters of an enemy than a field of battle, from which the dead had not yet been removed. No sooner had they reached the streets, than the soldiers fell down in multitudes from inanition or fatigue. Soon a frightful typhus fever broke out in their attenuated ranks. The presence and activity of Napoleon alone alleviated these accumulated evils, and provided hospitals and resources for the suffering multitude. The grand allied army, including both that of Blücher and of Schwarzenberg, extended along the course of the Rhine, from Kehl to Coblenz: the army of Silesia, forming the right, being opposite to Coblenz, and spreading up the hilly part of the Rhine to Ehrenbreitstein; that of Bohemia spreading from the Main to the Neckar, and thence to the borders of the Black Forest.

26. The Germans have long connected heart-stirring associations with the sight, and even the name of the Rhine. The vast amphitheatre of the central Alps, from the snows of which that noble stream takes its rise; the sublime cataract by which it descends into the plains of Germany; the ancient and peopled cities which lie along its banks; the romantic regions through whose precipices it afterwards flows; the feudal remains by which their summits are crowned; the interesting legends of the olden time with which they are connected; the vineyards which nestle in their sunny nooks; the topaz-blaze of the cliffs on which the mouldering ruins are placed—have long sunk into the heart of that imaginative people, and, united to the thrilling music of Haydn,* have touch-

* "The Rhine! the Rhine! be blessings on the Rhine!
St Rochus bless the land of love and wine!
The groves and high-hung meads, whose glories shine
In painted waves below;
Its rocks, whose topaz-beam betrays the vine,
Of richer ruby glow.
The Rhine! the Rhine! be blessings on the Rhine!
Beats there a sad heart here?—pour forth the wine!"

ed the inmost chords of the German soul. They connected it, in an especial manner, with the idea of Germany *as a whole*. It was their great frontier stream; it recalled the days of their emperors and independence; it had become, as it were, the emblem of the Fatherland. It may easily be conceived what effect upon the armies of a people thus excited—whose hearts had thrilled to the songs of Körner, whose swords had drunk of the blood of Leipsic—the sight of the Rhine produced, when it first burst upon their united and conquering arms. Involuntarily the columns halted when they reached the heights beyond Hochheim, where its windings spread out as on a map beneath their feet; the rear ranks hurried to the front; the troops uncovered as they beheld the stream of their fathers; tears trickled down many cheeks; joy, too big for utterance, swelled every heart; and the enthusiasm passing from rank to rank, soon a hundred thousand voices joined in the cheers which told the world that the war of independence was ended, AND GERMANY DELIVERED.†

27. Nothing remained but to reap the fruits of this mighty victory,—to gather up the fragments of this prodigious spoil. Yet so wide was it spread, so far had the French empire extended over Europe, that to collect these fruits was a matter of no small time and labour. The giant was thrown down, but it was no easy undertaking to uncage his limbs, and collect his armour. The rickety kingdom of Westphalia was the first of Napoleon's political creations which sank to the dust, never again to rise. Jerome, already almost dethroned by the incursion of Chernicheff, was finally swept away by the arms of Bernadotte. Woronzoff, with the advanced guard of his army, entered Cassel nine days after the battle of Leipsic; Jerome

† The following lines were at this period added to the national anthem, pointing to the anxious desire, generally felt, to reclaim from the spoiler the German provinces on the left bank of the Rhine:—

"The Rhine shall no longer be our boundary—
It is the great artery of the state,
And it shall flow through the heart of our empire."

had previously abandoned that capital; the greater part of his army joined the Allies, and the few who remained faithful to his cause precipitately retired to Düsseldorf, where he crossed the Rhine. He was closely followed by Winzingerode, who not only soon organised the whole kingdom of Westphalia in the interest of the Allies, but overthrew the revolutionary dynasty in the grand-duchy of Berg, which united its arms to the common standards of Germany. The army of the Prince-Royal, united to that of Benningesen, no longer required for the great operations in the field, spread itself over the north of Germany. By Göttingen it marched to Hanover, everywhere re-establishing the authority of the King of England, amidst the unanimous transports of the inhabitants, who chased away their old oppressors, the douaniers, with every mark of ignominy. Bernadotte's headquarters were established in that city, while Winzingerode spread over the grand-duchy of Oldenburg, and East Friesland; and Bulow marched to Munster, on his way to Holland, where the people were only waiting for the approach of the allied standards to throw off the French yoke, and declare their independence. Those Prussian corps, with their shoes and clothing entirely worn out by the protracted and fatiguing campaign they had undergone, were now in no condition to undertake any ulterior operations; but at this juncture a liberal supply of clothing and every necessary arrived from England, which at once restored their former efficiency, and for which they expressed the most unbounded gratitude.

28. Davoust, who had been left in Hamburg with twenty-five thousand French, besides ten thousand Danes, presented a more important and difficult object of conquest. Bernadotte wisely determined to unite his forces to those of Walmoden, in order to cut off the retreat, and secure the reduction of this powerful body of veteran troops; and with this view he broke up from Hanover on the 20th November, and marched by Lüneburg to Boitzenburg

on the Elbe, where he arrived four days afterwards; while Woronzoff invested Harburg, and Strogonoff moved against Stade. An attempt to take the latter town by escalade failed; but the French commander, fearing a repetition of the attack, withdrew his forces across the Elbe, and joined the Danes at Gluckstadt. The Prince-Royal, having now collected forty thousand men, prepared a general attack on Davoust, who was in position behind the Steckenitz; but the French marshal, fearful of being cut off from Hamburg, quitted that position during the night, and retired behind the Bille. The effect of this retrograde movement was to separate entirely the French corps from the Danish auxiliaries; and the latter, foreseeing the perilous predicament in which their allies would soon be placed, deemed it most expedient to detach themselves from their fortunes, and accordingly retired to Lübeck. Thicker they were immediately followed by the allied forces. The Danish commander, finding himself menaced with an assault which he was in no condition to resist, proposed a capitulation, which was accepted, and he was permitted to rejoin the bulk of the Danish forces at Segeberg, while Davoust shut himself up in Hamburg, resolved to defend his post to the last extremity.

29. The Danes after this retired towards their own country, followed by Walmoden; but seeing that the allied general had imprudently extended himself too far, they gained an unforeseen advantage over him. Three battalions of Danish infantry, with two regiments of cavalry, and six guns, having been vigorously charged by the Swedish horse, had laid down their arms; but the Swedish commander having imprudently left only a single squadron of hussars to guard so large a body of prisoners, they rose on their escort, and almost all escaped, leaving the guns alone in the hands of the Swedes. After this event, discredit to both parties, the one for the surprise, the other for the breach of faith, the Danes retired in a body towards Kiel, pursued by Walmoden, who, in order

to cut off their retreat, took post himself at Osterrade with part of his forces, while the remainder pushed on after their line of retreat. The Danes, seeing their pursuers thus divided, quickly fell upon the corps at Osterrade with ten thousand men, and defeated it with considerable loss. The torrent of success, however, on the part of the Allies, was too violent to be arrested by such a casual check. Threatened by superior forces, the Danes shut themselves up in Rendsburg; Bernadotte advanced to Kiel; and the Allies spread themselves over the whole of the south of Jutland. Upon this, the Danish commander, seeing it was impossible to keep the field against such superior forces, and that the whole southern provinces of Denmark would speedily be overrun, entered into conferences with the Prince-Royal with a view to an armistice, and the adhesion of Denmark to the allied powers. On the 15th December an armistice was accordingly concluded, to endure for fifteen days only; but this led to negotiations with the cabinet of Copenhagen, which terminated in a peace between Denmark and the allied powers, which was signed on the 14th January and 8th February 1814: the particulars of the treaty will afterwards be given. Meanwhile, the two fortresses of Gluckstadt and Friedrichsort, being excluded from the armistice, were besieged by the Swedish forces; and such activity did the Prince-Royal display in his operations, that the latter of these fortresses was compelled to surrender on the 19th December, with a hundred pieces of cannon and eight hundred prisoners.

30. The principal attention of the Allies, however, after the battle of Leipsic, was drawn to the city of Dresden, where St Cyr, as already noticed [*ante*, Chap. LXXXI. § 8], had been left with thirty-five thousand men, when Napoleon set out in the direction of Wittenberg and Berlin. At that period, the only force left to observe the place was Count Ostermann Tolstoy's, whose troops did not exceed twenty thousand men. Profiting by so considerable a superiority, St Cyr

wisely resolved to make a sortie, and throw the enemy back upon the Bohemian frontier. Four divisions, accordingly, mustering altogether twenty thousand men, moved on the 17th October against the Russian general, whose forces were for the most part new levies who had never seen fire. Two divisions of the French attacked the Russians in front, while two others assailed them in flank by the side of Plauen. With such skill was St Cyr's attack conceived, and with such vigour was it executed, that Ostermann's troops were broken at all points, and obliged to retire in disorder, which their great superiority in cavalry alone prevented from being converted into a flight. As it was, the loss they sustained amounted to twelve hundred prisoners, ten guns, and a bridge equipage, besides fifteen hundred killed and wounded. Disconcerted by this check, Ostermann hastened to regain the Bohemian frontier, which he crossed two days after; and the garrison of Töplitz, consisting of ten thousand Austrians, having advanced to his support, St Cyr relinquished the pursuit and returned to Dresden, where in the interval all the works erected by the enemy to straiten the city had been demolished.

31. This advantage was considerable, and alike creditable to the talents of St Cyr, and the valour of the troops under his command; but it was an accessary only, and did not counterbalance the great events of the campaign. It was in the plains of Leipsic that the fate of Dresden and its immense garrison was decided. When Napoleon set out from the Saxon capital for Düben, he left for the troops it contained only provisions for seven, and forage for three days; and so complete was the exhaustion of the surrounding country, that the garrison were able to add hardly anything to these scanty stores, during the few days that they had regained possession of the open country. At the same time, the influx of stragglers, sick and wounded, left behind by the Grand Army on leaving the Elbe, continued unabated. All attempts to execute

Napoleon's orders, by sending the maimed to Torgau, had failed, under circumstances of more than usual horror;* and Dresden, encumbered with agonised and useless mouths, soon found itself beset by a double amount of enemies. No sooner was the battle of Leipsic decided, than Schwartzenberg, justly eager to secure so splendid a prize as the fruit of his victory, detached Klenau with his whole force to reinforce Ostermann, who in the mean time had more than recruited his losses by drafts from Töplitz, and the other garrisons and depots in the interior of Bohemia. Their troops, fully fifty thousand strong, effected a junction on the 26th, and resumed the blockade of Dresden on the day following; when St Cyr, in no condition to keep the field against such superior forces, was obliged to shut himself up with a dejected army, and hardly any provisions.

32. The condition of the French marshal was now in the highest degree alarming, and such as might well have struck terror into the most dauntless breast. Although the troops under his orders had exerted themselves to the utmost, during the ten days that they had the command of the adjacent country, to recruit their slender stock of provisions; yet such was the

total exhaustion of its resources by the previous requisitions of Napoleon, and the passage of so many vast armies over its surface, that they were barely able to maintain themselves by the most rigorous exactions, without adding anything to the miserable stores, adequate only to seven days' consumption, which Napoleon had left for their use. On the 27th October, therefore, they found themselves shut up in Dresden with this scanty stock of provisions; while, at the same time, the depression of the troops, the almost total exhaustion of ammunition, the rapid desertion of all the German auxiliaries within the place, and the superior forces of the enemy before its walls, rendered it altogether impossible to attempt to make their way out by force of arms. During the whole of this period they were left without any orders, direct or indirect, from Napoleon, or any other intelligence than the rumours, vague and exaggerated, which prevailed as to the disaster of Leipsic. Driven to desperation, St Cyr endeavoured to make a sortie, with fifteen thousand men, by the right bank of the Elbe, in order to effect, if possible, a junction with the garrison of Torgau or Wittenberg, and with their united force cut his way across to the Rhine.

* "As soon as the wounded were apprised of the intention to remove them, they gave themselves up to transports of joy, thinking they would now at length revisit their country. In such multitudes did they crowd, or rather crawl down to the quays, that the boats were in danger of sinking, and one was actually submerged, and all on board perished. Nevertheless, though a few only could be received, from the limited number of boats, nothing could prevail on these unhappy wretches to return to the hospitals. They preferred lying down in rows along the river-side, to be in readiness to get into the first boat that appeared. The assemblage of these spectres, who lay out all night in the cold, presented the most hideous spectacle which a war, where such scenes were too frequent, could exhibit. But the superiority of the enemy, and the manner in which Napoleon had conducted the war, rendered the prescribed evacuation totally impossible. All the hospitals in the rear, sooner or later, fell into the enemy's hands. Three thousand were sent from Dresden in boats, but I never ascertained whether they reached Torgau."

—St Cyr, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 200, 201.

33. But the allied generals had information of his design, and were on the alert. General Wied-Runkel met them with three thousand men on the 6th; and though the French were nearly five times that number, yet such was their physical attenuation from want, and moral depression from disaster, that they were unable to force their way through, and, after a slight combat, were driven back again into Dresden. This check, and throwing back of mouths, proved fatal both to the spirits and resources of the garrison. Discouragement became universal, escape seemed impossible, provisions of every sort were absolutely exhausted, discipline was dissolved by suffering: the miserable soldiers wandered about like spectres in the streets, or sank in woeful crowds into the hospitals.

"You might see others on the earth lie
mourning,
Their heavy eyes with dying motion turn-
ing;
Stretching their arms to heaven, wherever
death
Surprised them, parting with their sigh'd
out breath.
Which way soever I convert my eye,
The breathless multitude dispersed lie."*

"Such," says an eyewitness, "was the famishing condition of the French troops, that they pillaged for the twentieth time the neighbouring vineyards, and cut flesh off the limbs of the wounded horses lying by the wayside. In the interior of the town, misery had risen to the highest pitch. The mills were idle: there was neither grain to grind, nor water to turn the wheels. The bakers had shut up their shops, having no more bread to sell: a miserable crowd surrounded their doors, demanding, with mingled threats and prayers, their accustomed supplies. Many of the poor had been for several days without bread; and, as the stock of butcher-meat was also nearly expended, they were reduced to the most miserable shifts to support life.

34. "Nor were the French soldiers in any better situation: every day they killed thirty horses; and, instead of the accustomed ration of an ounce and a half of butcher-meat, to which they had been long reduced, they got nothing but double that quantity of horse-flesh, often so bad that the soldiers could not eat it, even though pressed by the pangs of hunger. At last, however, famine overcame their repugnance, and the miserable wretches disputed with each other the half-putrid carcases which they found in the streets, and soon their bones were laid bare, and the very tendons of the dead animals eagerly devoured. The ravages which a contagious fever made on the inhabitants of the town, added to the public distress. Among the citizens alone, not less than three hundred were carried off weekly by it. Two hundred dead bodies were every day brought out of the military hospitals. Such was the accumulation in the churchyards, that the grave-

* OVID, *Meta morphoses*, book vii.

diggers could not inter them, and they were laid naked, in ghastly rows, along the place of sepulture. The bodies were heaped in such numbers on the dead carts, that frequently they fell from them, and the wheels gave a frightful sound in crushing the bones of the corpses which thus lay on the streets.

"Dead corpse, without the dues of funeral,
They weakly bear: the ports are now too
small.

Or uninhumed they lie, or else are thrown
On wealthless piles: respect is given to
none."†

The hospital attendants and carters trampled down the dead in the carts, like baggage of straw, to make room for more; and, not unfrequently, some of the bodies gave signs of life, and even emitted shrieks under this harsh usage. Several of those thrown into the Elbe for dead, were revived by the sudden immersion in cold water, and the wretches were seen struggling in vain with the waves, by which they were soon swallowed up. Medicines and hospital stores there were none; and almost all the surgeons and apothecaries were dead."

35. At length the French marshal, unable to prolong his defence, entered into a capitulation, in virtue of which the Allies gained possession of the town, and the French laid down their arms, on condition of being sent back to France, and not serving against the Allies till regularly exchanged. On the day following, the troops began to defile out of the town in six columns, and, after laying down their arms, proceeded on the road to France. The result showed the magnitude of the success which had been achieved, and the terrible disasters which were accumulating round Napoleon's empire since the catastrophe of Leipsic; for the number who surrendered were no less than thirty-two generals, seventeen hundred and ninety-five officers, and thirty-three thousand private soldiers, of whom twenty-five thousand were able to bear arms.

36. The terms awarded to the French garrison were nearly the same as those which Napoleon, in 1796, had

† Ibid.

granted to Marshal Wurmser at the capitulation of Mantua [*ante*, Chap. xx. § 151]; and the Allies obtained possession, by the surrender, of no less than two hundred and forty pieces of cannon. When the troops marched out, they afforded a melancholy proof of the degree to which the exactions of the Emperor had strained the physical resources of France, and his total disregard of the comforts or subsistence of his soldiers; for such was the weakness of the infantry, arising from youth, fatigue, and famine, that, by the admission of St Cyr himself, three-fourths of them would have perished before they reached the Rhine.* Such as it was, however, the capitulation was disapproved of by Schwartzenberg and the allied sovereigns, who intimated to St Cyr that no terms of surrender could be admitted but such as provided for the garrison being conducted as prisoners of war into the Austrian states; but that, if he was dissatisfied with these conditions, the troops would be replaced in Dresden in the same situation in which they were before the convention had been concluded. This offer, which was communicated to St Cyr at Altenburg, on the road to France, the day following the capitulation, was felt by him, as indeed it was equally by his opponents, to be perfectly elusory; as not only were the enemy now in Dresden, and had been there for seven days, but they had become acquainted with all its weak points, and in particular with the absolute want of provisions to subsist a besieged garrison even for a single day. He rightly declined to accede, therefore, to the alternative offered of returning to Dresden; and, being unable to make any resistance, preferred being conducted, with all his followers, as prisoners of war into Bohemia; loudly protesting against this violation of the convention, as a breach

* "The soldiers, too young to bear the fatigues of a campaign so active, and privations so long continued, were indeed in such a state of exhaustion, that the half, and perhaps three-fourths, would have been unable to regain the banks of the Rhine."—St Cyr, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 256.

of good faith and of the laws of war, which would one day recoil with fearful force on the heads of the parties who were guilty of it.

37. This refusal on the part of the allied sovereigns, to ratify a convention concluded by the general in the full command of their armies on the occasion, has excited, as well it might, the most vehement feelings of indignation among the French writers. There can be no doubt that it was to the last degree impolitic in Klenau to have acceded to such a convention, when escape and subsistence were equally beyond the power of the enemy; and when, by simply maintaining his position for a few days, without firing a shot, he must have compelled them to surrender at discretion. It is equally certain that, even if half the garrison reached the Rhine, they would have proved no small acquisition to Napoleon, whose greatest weakness was now likely to arise from the want of experienced soldiers, and whose necessities might render him little scrupulous in his adherence to the treaty, as to their not serving again till exchanged. But all these considerations are reasons why the capitulation should never have been entered into; they afford none to vindicate its violation. Schwartzenberg might have debarred his lieutenants from entering into any convention but such as contained a reservation of his sanction; but he had not done so. Klenau had full powers; and the capitulation, upon the faith of which the French had delivered up Dresden, surrendered their guns and laid down their arms, was clearly within his duties and province as the general commanding the siege, and was absolute, without any condition or suspensive clause. In these circumstances, it was unquestionably obligatory upon the honour of the victors, who are bound, by the most sacred of all ties, to respect the rights of those who are in their power, and have become incapable of making any further resistance.

38. Justice in such a case can admit of no equivocation, derived even from

the most pressing reasons of expediency. Honour regards all treaties with the vanquished as debts which must be paid. The proposal to reinstate St Cyr in the Saxon capital, after its defences and total want of provisions had become known, and his own troops were far advanced on the road to the Rhine, though the best that could be done next to observing the convention, was plainly an offer such as the French garrison neither could, nor were bound to accept. In violating this convention, the allied sovereigns did not imitate the honourable fidelity with which Napoleon observed the conditions of the capitulation of Mantua, granted to Wurmser in 1796 [*ante*, Chap. xx. § 151]; but rather took a model from the cordial approbation which he gave to the unworthy fraud by which the bridge of the Danube was surprised in 1805,* or the express example which he had set of disavowing an armistice, in his own refusal to ratify that of Treviso, concluded in 1801 by his lieutenant, Brune. Condemning equally such deviations from the path of honour by all parties engaged in the contest, it is with pride and gratitude that the English historian must refer to the conduct of his own country on occasion of a similar crisis; and when he recollects that the convention of Cintra, though unanimously condemned by the English people, was executed, on the admission of their opponents themselves, with scrupulous fidelity by the British government,† he must admit that such an honourable distinction was cheaply purchased by all the advantages which its faithful observance gave to the enemy [*ante*, Chap. LIV. § 75].

39. The interest excited by the refusal, on the part of the allied sovereigns, to ratify the convention of Dresden, was, however, attended with

* *Ante*, chap. xl. § 106; and chap. xxxii. § 71.

† "The convention of Cintra, though condemned by public opinion in England, was executed with honourable fidelity by the English government."—*For*, iv. 356. "Look at England. She condemned the convention of Cintra, but did not the less execute its provisions with scrupulous faith."—NAPOLÉON.

one good effect, in preventing a similar political mistake in the case of Marshal Davoust and the garrison of Hamburg. Bernadotte, who had now assumed the command in chief in that quarter, was far from evincing the same activity and vigour in his operations against the important French army shut up in that city, which he had displayed in bringing to a conclusion hostilities with the ancient rivals of Sweden—the Danes. On the contrary, he had at this period entered into negotiations with the French marshal, the object of which was, that, upon condition of surrendering Hamburg and the adjacent forts, he was to be permitted to retire to France with all his forces. He, in the first instance, had promised Sir Charles Stewart that he would not enter into such a capitulation without his consent; but no sooner had the former been called to Frankfort, to attend on behalf of England the conferences of the allied powers, than he sent express instructions to Walmoden to bring about a convention of such a character with Davoust. But this equivocal step did not escape the vigilant eye of the English military plenipotentiary, who, the moment he received intelligence of what was in agitation, despatched such energetic remonstrances‡ against the proposed

‡ "I trust your Royal Highness, with your wonted condescension, will permit me to express the sentiments of Great Britain on a military question, in which it must feel the deepest interest. To all appearance Denmark is now with us, and Marshal Davoust is gone. Should he escape to France by means of any capitulation, I foresee it will affix the deepest stain on the military glory of the army of the north; it would be nothing less than to transport the corps of Davoust from a fatal spot, where its destruction is inevitable, into one in which it might again appear in battle against the Allies. My prince, you have loaded me with your kindness; be assured it is of your glory, of your personal interests, that I am thinking. I will answer for the opinion of my country. It is with the most sensible pain that I have recently heard, even after the assurances to the contrary which you gave me yesterday evening, that General Walmoden has received fresh orders to the effect I so earnestly deprecate."—SIR CHARLES STEWART (now Marquis Londonderry) to the PRINCE ROYAL, 16th November 1813.

measure, that the Prince-Royal was obliged to abandon it. And thus the same eminent and patriotic officer, who, by his moral courage on the eve of the battle of Leipsic, had gained for the Allies the decisive advantage of bringing the Prince-Royal's army up to the charge on that eventful day, now rendered to his country the not less important service of preventing a capitulation, which, by restoring twenty-five thousand veteran troops to the standards of Napoleon, might have entirely changed the fate of the war next spring in France.

40. The fall of Dresden was shortly after followed by that of the other chief fortresses on the Oder and the Vistula. On the 21st November, Stettin, which had been closely blockaded for eight months, and the garrison of which had exhausted their last means of subsistence, surrendered: the troops, still eight thousand strong, were made prisoners of war, and three hundred and fifty guns on the walls and in the magazines fell into the hands of the Allies, who shortly after despatched the blockading force to reinforce the corps of Tauenzlein, to which it belonged. Fifteen hundred Dutch troops, who formed part of the garrison, immediately entered the ranks of the Allies—an ominous circumstance, which presaged but too surely the revolt of Holland, which in effect soon took place. Torgau was not long in following the example of Stettin, although the more recent investment of the place rendered it necessary to have recourse to an actual siege, instead of the more tedious method of blockade. On the 23d October, Tauenzlein sat down before its walls; and on the 1st November the investment was completed, and the trenches were opened on the 22d. The approaches of the besiegers were proceeding rapidly, when an armistice was agreed to on the 28th, with a view to arranging the terms of a capitulation. But when the French commander discovered that an unconditional surrender was required, he broke off the conferences, and hostilities were resumed.

41. They were not, however, of long duration. Disease, more terrible than the sword of the enemy, was making the most unheard-of ravages within the walls. Typhus fever, the well-known and never-failing attendant on human suffering, was carrying off the garrison by hundreds daily; while thousands encumbered those awful dens of misery, the military hospitals. Decimated by death, attenuated by suffering, the garrison were in no condition to maintain the place against the impetuous and repeated attacks of the Allies. After a fortnight of open trenches, the outworks were carried by assault, and the rampart seriously shaken by the fire of the besiegers' artillery. The governor, Dutailly, finding the troops under his command incapable of manning the works, from the extraordinary ravages of fever, was obliged to surrender at discretion. Including the sick in the hospitals, the number who were captured was ten thousand, the poor remains of eighteen thousand who had sought refuge there after the retreat of the Grand Army from the Elbe. But such was the danger of contagion in that great pest house, that the Allies did not venture to enter the fortress till the 10th of January. In Torgau was taken the whole reserve park of the Grand Army, the want of which had been so severely felt at the close of the battle of Leipsic, including two hundred and eighty-seven guns; but these advantages were dearly purchased by the terrible epidemic which, issuing from its woe-struck walls, made the circuit, in the following years, of every country of Europe, until among the Venetian paupers in 1816, and the Irish poor in 1817, it encountered a starving population, where, amidst equal suffering, it swept away numbers proportionally greater into the common charnel-house of mortality.*

* The author witnessed the poor of Venice labouring under this epidemic in 1816, and the Irish prostrated by its ravages in 1817. The imagination of Dante himself never conceived anything so terrible as the scenes of woe then exhibited under that frightful scourge—the sad bequest to humanity of the ambition and the wars of Napoleon.

42. During the course of this terrible struggle on the Elbe, the fortresses on the Vistula, still remaining in the hands of the French, have almost escaped observation; but the time was now approaching when their defence, after a siege or blockade of nearly twelve months, could no longer be prolonged. Rapp, as already mentioned, had done everything which firm resolution and rigorous discipline could effect, to restore order among the motley group of five-and-thirty thousand men, who had taken refuge in Dantzic after the Moscow retreat, and in some degree he had succeeded. Disease, however, as usual after all these disastrous retreats, soon began to make ravages in the interior of its walls, and, before the end of January 1813, six thousand were in hospital. The garrison, nevertheless, was still so powerful, that the Russian blockading force, which was not of greater strength, and composed chiefly of landwehr, was unable to confine it within the circuit of the walls; and in the course of January and February several severe actions took place, with various success, but without the besiegers being able to complete the investment. Early in March, the Russians, being reinforced by the troops who had successfully terminated the blockade of Pillau, amounting to six thousand men, made a vigorous attack on the fortified posts held by the French in advance of the city, particularly Langenfurth, Stotzenberg, and D'Ohra; but they were repulsed after a severe action, with the loss of fifteen hundred men. Encouraged by this success, Rapp shortly after made a sortie to collect subsistence, which was beginning to fail, in which he in a great measure succeeded, and made himself master of an hospital of the enemy, containing several hundred sick and wounded.

43. Disease, however, now came to the aid of the Allies; and the accumulation of so many troops—some of them bringing the seeds of contagion with their columns into the fortress—began to produce the most fatal ravages. In the end of April, the health of the garrison having been in some

degree restored, a sortie was hazarded into the island of Nehrung, the fertility and agricultural riches of which promised to afford considerable resources for the garrison. The Russians, three thousand strong, tried to stop the columns, but they were defeated with heavy loss, and the French advanced eight leagues along the island, making spoil of all its provisions, and bringing back grain in abundance to the fortress, besides five hundred head of cattle. In the course of May, however, the besieging army received considerable reinforcements from the interior of Russia, and the adjoining provinces of Prussia; and in the beginning of June, the Duke of Würtemberg, who had assumed the command, had thirty thousand combatants under his banners. Yet notwithstanding this, Rapp, on the 9th June, again made a sortie at the head of fifteen thousand men; and although defeated at some points, he succeeded in bringing considerable stores of forage and growing rye into the fortress. In this affair, both parties lost about twelve hundred men. Hostilities were soon after terminated by the armistice of Pleswitz, and not again resumed till the end of August—the fortress, in the intermediate period, having been revictualled every five days, by commissioners conjointly appointed for that purpose, in terms of the convention. The armistice terminated on the 28th, and several obstinate conflicts took place, on the following morning, at the advanced posts, in the course of which, though success was balanced, the besiegers sensibly gained ground, and contracted the circle within which the posts of the besieged were confined. During the whole of September repeated sorties were made by the garrison, some of which were successful and others defeated; but the besieged, after a most honourable resistance, were at length thrown back at all points into the fortress; and the Duke of Würtemberg having received considerable reinforcements, and a regular battering-train, operations in form commenced in the first week of October.

44. The bombardment commenced on the 8th, before the breaching batteries were ready, or any impression had been made even upon the external works of the place. With such vigour was the fire kept up, that in a short time the town was in flames in several places. During the distraction produced by these conflagrations, the principal attack was directed against the suburb called Scholtenhausen, and the redoubts which covered it; and, after a vigorous cannonade for some days, the besiegers succeeded in establishing themselves in that outwork, though after sustaining a loss of a thousand men. From this advanced position the bombardment was resumed with redoubled vigour and terrible efficacy: soon the flames broke out in eight-and-twenty different quarters; the principal magazines in the place, both of provisions and clothing, were consumed; and, notwithstanding the extent of their supplies, provisions began to grow scarce. The body of the place, however, was still uninjured: the rampart was unshaken, and the firm spirit of Rapp could not brook the idea of submission.

45. At length, in the beginning of November, the regular siege commenced, and parallels were begun to be run with great vigour. Although the approaches of the besiegers were sensibly retarded by the heroic exploits of a small corps of volunteers, who more than once carried terror and conflagration into the centre of the besiegers' lines, yet their progress was rapid and alarming. All the external works of the place fell successively into the enemy's hands; a naval officer, who was despatched to make the Emperor acquainted with the distressed state of the garrison, was unable, after the most heroic efforts, to penetrate farther than Copenhagen: desertion was taking place to an alarming extent, and all hopes of being relieved having vanished with the battle of Leipsic, Rapp at length consented to capitulate; stipulating, however, that the garrison should be permitted to retire to France, on condition of not serving again till exchanged. The

garrison still consisted of sixteen thousand men, of whom about one-half were French, and the remainder Germans and Poles. By the capitulation, it was provided that the ratification of the Emperor of Russia should be obtained; and he having refused to sanction the condition relative to the return of the garrison to France, the same offer was made to them as had been made to St Cyr, that they should be reinstated in the fortress in the same position in which they were before they left it. This was strictly legal in this case, as the sanction of the Emperor had been expressly stipulated for in the convention; and as it was not agreed to, Rapp and the French were conducted as prisoners of war into Russia, but almost all the auxiliaries immediately entered the allied ranks.

46. The lesser places still held by the French on the Vistula having exhausted their last means of subsistence, surrendered shortly after. The garrison of Zamosc, three thousand strong, capitulated on the 22d December: that of Modlin, with twelve hundred men, three days after; so that the tricolor flag no longer waved to the eastward of the Oder. About the same time General Dalton, who commanded the French garrison in Erfurth, finding himself not sufficiently strong to defend the whole circuit of the walls, retired into the citadel of St Petersburg, on the rocky summit of which he still maintained himself when the city was surrendered by capitulation in the beginning of January. At the close of the campaign, France retained only, of her immense possessions beyond the Rhine, Hamburg, Magdeburg, and Wittenberg, on the Elbe; Cüstrin and Glogau on the Oder; and the citadels of Erfurth and Würzburg. All the rest of the places, garrisoned or influenced by her arms, had been torn from her; the Confederation of the Rhine was dissolved, and its forces were marching under the allied banners; and, reffluent over the bridges of Mayence, eighty thousand men, with two hundred guns, sad and dejected, had retired into France—the poor remains of four hun-

dred thousand combatants, with twelve hundred cannon, who, three months before, still held the scales of fortune equal on the banks of the Elbe. The contest in Germany was over; French domination beyond the Rhine was at an end; thirty thousand prisoners taken on the field, and eighty thousand since surrendered in garrison, constituted the proud trophies of the battle of Leipsic.

47. The universal fermentation produced in Europe by the deliverance of Germany, was not long of spreading to the DUTCH PROVINCES. The yoke of Napoleon, universally grievous from the enormous pecuniary exactions with which it was attended, and the wasting military conscriptions to which it immediately led, had been in a peculiar manner felt as oppressive in Holland, from the maritime and commercial habits of the people, and the total stoppage of all their sources of industry, which the naval war and long-continued blockade of their coasts had occasioned. They had tasted for nearly twenty years of the last drop of humiliation in the cup of the vanquished—that of being compelled themselves to aid in upholding the system which was exterminating their resources, and to purchase with the blood of their children the ruin of their country. These feelings, which had for years existed in such intensity as to have rendered revolt inevitable but for the evident hopelessness at all former times of the attempt, could no longer be restrained after the battle of Leipsic had thrown down the colossus of French external power, and the approach of the allied standards to their frontiers had opened to the people the means of salvation. From the Hanse Towns the flame of independence spread to the nearest cities of the old United Provinces; and the small number of French troops in the country at once encouraged revolt and paved the way for external aid.

48. At this period the whole troops which Napoleon had in Holland did not exceed six thousand French, and two regiments of Germans, upon whose fidelity to their colours little reliance

could be placed. Upon the approach of the allied troops under Bulow, who advanced by the road of Munster, and Winzingerode, who soon followed from the same quarter, the douaniers all withdrew from the coast, the garrison of Amsterdam retired, and the whole disposable force of the country was concentrated at Utrecht, to form a corps of observation, and act according to circumstances. This was the signal for a general revolt. At Amsterdam, the troops were no sooner gone than the inhabitants rose in insurrection, deposed the Imperial authorities, hoisted the orange flag, and established a provisional government with a view to the restoration of the ancient order of things; yet not violently or with cruelty, but with the calmness and composure which attest the exercise of social rights by a people long habituated to their enjoyment. The same change took place, at the same time and in the same orderly manner, at Rotterdam, Dordrecht, Delft, Leyden, Haarlem, and the other chief towns. The people, everywhere, amidst cries of "*Orange Boven!*" and universal rapture, mounted the orange cockade, and reinstated the ancient authorities. After twenty years of foreign domination and suffering, the glorious spectacle was exhibited, of a people peaceably regaining their independence, without shedding a drop of blood, and, unstained either by passion or vengeance, reverting to the institutions of former times.*

* The following proclamation, issued by the provisional government of the Hague in name of the Prince of Orange, is singularly descriptive of this memorable and bloodless revolution:—"*Orange Boven!* Holland is free; the Allies advance on Utrecht, the English have been invited, the French are flying on all sides. The sea is opened: commerce revives: the spirit of party has ceased—*what we have suffered is pardoned and forgiven.* Able and intelligent men have been called to the helm of government, who have invited the prince to resume the national sovereignty. We join our forces to those of the Allies, to compel the enemy to make peace; the people will ere long have a day of rejoicing at the expense of government; but every species of pillage or excess is absolutely forbidden. Every one returns thanks to God: old times have returned. *Orange Boven!*"—*CAPEFIGUE*, x. 273, 279, note.

49. Military and political consequences of the highest importance immediately followed this uncontrollable outbreak of public enthusiasm. A deputation from Holland waited on the Prince-Regent of England and the Prince of Orange, in London: the latter shortly after embarked on board an English line-of-battle ship, the *Warrior*, and on the 27th landed at Scheveling, from whence he proceeded to the Hague. Meanwhile the French troops and coast-guards, who had concentrated at Utrecht, seeing that the general effervescence was not as yet supported by any solid military force, and that the people, though they had all hoisted the orange flag, were not aided by any corps of the Allies, recovered from their consternation, and made a general forward movement against Amsterdam. Before they got there, however, a body of three hundred Cossacks had reached that capital, where they were received with enthusiastic joy: and this advanced guard was soon after followed by General Benkendorf's brigade, which, after travelling by post from Zwoll to Harderwyk, embarked at the latter place, and, by the aid of a favourable wind, reached Amsterdam on the 1st of December.

50. The Russian general immediately advanced against the forts of Mader and Hafweg, of which he made himself master, taking twenty pieces of cannon and six hundred prisoners; while on the eastern frontier, General Oppen, with Bulow's advanced guards, carried Dornbourg by assault on the 23d, and, advancing against Arnheim, threw the garrison, three thousand strong, which strove to prevent the place being invested, with great loss back into the town. Next day, Bulow himself came up with the main strength of his corps, and, as the ditches were still dry, hazarded an escalade, which proved entirely successful; the greater part of the garrison retiring to Nimeguen, by the bridge of the Rhine. The French troops, finding themselves thus threatened on all sides, withdrew altogether from Holland: the fleet at the Texel hoisted the orange flag, with the exception of Admiral Verhuel,

who, with a body of marines that still proved faithful to Napoleon, threw himself with honourable fidelity into the fort of the Texel. Amsterdam, amidst transports of enthusiasm, received the beloved representative of the house of Orange. Before the close of the year, the tricolor flag floated only on Bergen-op-Zoom and a few of the southern frontier fortresses; and Europe beheld the prodigy of the seat of war having been transferred in a single year from the banks of the Nie-men to those of the Scheldt.

51. To complete the picture of this memorable year, there only remains to give a sketch of the Italian campaign, and of the operations of Wellington in the Spanish peninsula. The former can be but a sketch; for the operations of the opposite armies, though numerous and complicated, led to no material result; it was on the fields of Leipzig and Vittoria that the fate of the French empire was decided, and on them that the broad light of history requires to be thrown. Yet the narrative, how brief soever, will not be without its interest: for it will recall the memory of other days, when the dazzling light of the young Republic played around the bayonets of Napoleon's grenadiers; and after a long sojourn amidst the rough sounds of the German regions, there is a charm in the sweet accents of the Italian tongue.

52. Eugene Beauharnais, as already mentioned, retired from the grand army in Germany when Napoleon took the command, and he arrived at Milan on the 18th of May. His first care was to organise an army in Lombardy, which might put him in a condition to inspire feelings of apprehension in the cabinet of Vienna, or resist any attempt which it might make to recover, by force of arms, its lost and long-coveted possessions in Italy. Napoleon, by a decree, early in May intrusted the formation of the new army of Italy to his Viceroy, and it was to be composed entirely of native soldiers, or conscripts from the French departments adjoining the Alps. Though this ordinance bespoke strongly the confidence of the Emperor in his Italian

subjects, and might be supposed to increase the patriotic spirit which was developed in the north of Italy, yet it was attended with one obvious danger, which came to tell with signal severity upon the fortunes of the empire in its last moments. These soldiers were bound by no tie to the tramontane regions, and might be expected all to desert, if the fortune of war should compel the French eagles to retire across the Alps. When the Viceroy returned to Italy, he found only the skeletons of a few regiments, and three hundred officers and non-commissioned officers, who had been forwarded by post from Spain—the whole forces of the kingdom of Italy had perished in Russia, or been marched to the Elbe. But his energy and activity overcame every difficulty; and, by the beginning of July, fifty-two thousand men were in arms, of whom forty-five thousand infantry, and fifteen hundred horse, were present with the eagles.

53. On the other side, the Austrians were not idle. Early in July a respectable force was collected on the frontiers of Illyria, under the orders of Field-marshal Hiller; and before the end of the month it was raised to seven divisions, mustering fully fifty thousand combatants, of a description much superior to the Italian conscripts. In addition to this, they raised the landwehr of Illyria and Croatia, and, reinforced by several thousands of these hardy mountaineers, commenced the campaign the moment they received intelligence of the armistice being denounced, on the 17th August. At this period the Viceroy occupied the following positions. Two divisions under Grenier were stationed between Udina and Gorizia; and the remainder of the army, under Verdier, Marcognet, Gratian, and Palombini, stretched by the left by Palma Nuova to the blood-stained heights of Tarvis and Villach, occupying thus the whole eastern passes from Italy into Germany. Hiller's force, directly in front, extended from opposite Villach on his right to Agram on his left, where he had concentrated two divisions; and the ferment in the provinces of Croatia,

ceded to France, already promised the most favourable reception to the Austrians, if they invaded that portion of the spoils which France had won from the Hereditary States.

54. The Austrians, being the stronger party, were the first to commence hostilities. On the 17th, two columns passed the frontier stream of the Save at Agram, and directed their march towards Karlstadt and Fiume. General Jeannin, who commanded in that quarter, at first made preparations for resistance; but finding himself speedily surrounded by an insurrection, which broke out on all sides at the sight of the much-loved Austrian standards, he was obliged to abandon the first city and fall back on the second. This retrograde movement threw the whole Illyrian provinces into a blaze. All Croatia was soon in insurrection; the flame spread along the Dalmatian shore; and, as far as the mouths of the Cattaro, the whole mountaineers were in arms to throw off the yoke of France. This vehement ebullition, coupled with the numerical inferiority of Eugene, who found himself assailed by above fifty thousand German troops, for whom his newly-raised Italians were no adequate match, rendered it impossible for him to maintain his ground along the whole frontier. In consequence, abandoning Fiume and the whole coast of Illyria, he ascended with the bulk of his forces the course of the Isonzo, and took post in the intrenched camp at Tarvis, hoping to make good the passes till time was afforded for the armaments to be completed in his rear. Meanwhile Villach had been evacuated by the Italian troops; but no sooner did Eugene's reinforcement arrive in that direction than it was retaken by three French battalions; again it was carried by the Austrians, and finally gained by Eugene, who established his headquarters in that city. But these advantages were obtained by denuding the right and maritime provinces, and Fiume was occupied by the Austrians under General Nugent, without opposition, in the end of August.

55. On the 26th of August General Pino attacked the Austrian intrench-

ments on Mont Leobel; but the Italians failed entirely against that formidable bulwark, and were thrown back in utter disorder on Krainburg. Eugene brought them back to the charge in greater force, and the Austrians were driven out. The design of Hiller, at this period, was to have forced the enemy to evacuate the passes in his front in the Julian Alps, and retire behind the line of the Isonzo; and with that view he had occupied Fiestritz, from which point he could at pleasure either menace Tarvis, or turn and descend the valley of the Upper Save. To frustrate this design, Eugene directed an assault on this fortified post, and, after a sharp combat, Grenier, who commanded the assailants, carried it, with a loss to the enemy of eight hundred men. Encouraged by this success, the Viceroy made a general attack on the enemy's positions at all points. He met, however, with a severe check on his right, where General Belotti, with a brigade, was totally defeated, with a loss of twelve hundred men; and his right wing, disconcerted by this disaster, fell back, closely pursued by the Austrians, towards Trieste, while the insurrection in their favour spread over the whole of Istria. The Viceroy was obliged, therefore, to remain on the defensive; but, like a skilful general, he turned it to the best advantage. Observing that Hiller had directed the weight of his forces to the sea-coast on his left, to follow up his successes in the direction of Trieste, he moved in the same direction, and succeeded, after several actions, in expelling the enemy from Fiume, where General Pino established himself. So sudden was this attack, that the Archduke Maximilian, who was in the town at the time, with difficulty saved himself on board Admiral Freemantle's vessel.

56. These balanced successes on either side led to no decisive result, and, after a month's active hostilities, the position of the contending parties was not materially different from what it had been at their commencement. But events were now on the wing which gave a decisive advantage to the Aus-

trians, and threw back the Italian army behind the Adige. Large reinforcements, chiefly from the landwehr of the adjoining provinces, reached Hiller in the middle of September; he passed the Drave on the 19th of that month, and soon gained considerable advantages over the divisions of Grenier and Verdier, on the French left, in the Julian Alps. The object of this transference of active operations from the Austrian left on the sea-coast, to their right in the mountains, was soon apparent. The treaty of Ried, between the cabinet of Vienna and that of Munich, which secured the accession of Bavaria to the alliance, again put the House of Hapsburg in possession of the great central fortress of the Tyrol, and enabled the enemy to turn the Italian valleys by their upper extremity, amidst the Alpine snows. Hiller was not slow in turning to the best account this signal advantage. Directing a considerable part of his force up the valley of the Drave, which enters the Tyrol by Prunecken; and, moving forward towards the valley of the Adige, by the bridge of Ladiitch, Brixen, and the scenery immortalised in the Tyrolese war [*ante*, Chaps. LVIII. LX.], he himself remained in the centre to force the fortified posts held by the enemy at Tarvis. A vigorous attack was made by Hiller in person on the position of Tarvis, from which, after several obstinate conflicts, the Viceroy was at length driven with great loss. Despairing now of maintaining his ground in the hills, Eugene withdrew his troops, not without considerable difficulty, down all the valleys, abandoning altogether the crest of the mountains, and concentrated them on the banks of the Tagliamento, at the entrance of the plain of Friuli; while, by a decree from Gorizia, he directed the levy of fifteen thousand additional conscripts, to supply the loss of an equal number who had perished by fatigue, sickness, or the sword, during this consuming warfare of posts in the Alps.

57. The retreat, once commenced, could not easily be terminated. Encouraged by the accession of Bavaria, and the enthusiastic support of the

Tyrolese, who crowded with shouts of joy to their standards, the Austrians pressed everywhere on his retiring columns; and it was soon evident that the line of the Adige was the only one where a stand could be made. In contemplation of that event, the garrison of Palma Nuova was strengthened by three battalions, that of Venice augmented to twelve thousand men; while, to delay as long as possible the discouragement and disaffection which he was well aware the retreat of the army would produce in Italy, the Viceroy determined to maintain to the last extremity the line of the Isonzo. So long was the circuit which the troops required to make by Brixen and Trent, that he was not without hope that the new levies might be brought forward before the enemy threatened Verona. But so rapid was the march of events, that this was soon found to be impossible. On the 25th September, indeed, George Giffenga, with an Italian division, had gained some advantages over the enemy, and reoccupied Brixen; but the hourly increasing strength of the Germans, whose columns were now augmented by a vast concourse of volunteers from all parts of the Tyrol, soon compelled him to evacuate that town, and retreat successively by Bolzano and Lavis to Trent.

58. The latter town was next day evacuated, and its castle invested by the victorious Austrians; while the dispirited Italians retired to Volano, and the famous defiles of the Adige above Verona. Eugene, finding his rear thus threatened, felt that the line of the Isonzo was no longer tenable. Throwing garrisons, therefore, into a few forts as he retired rapidly across the Tagliamento, and after sustaining a severe defeat on the part of one of his divisions at St Daniel, he arrived on the 26th at Spressiano on the Piave. Meanwhile a bloody combat took place at Volano, which, after a gallant resistance, was carried by the Austrians, the Italians falling back to the still stronger and well-known position at the entrance of the pass of Serravalle. Here they were attacked next day: the Italian troops, now thoroughly discouraged,

made a very feeble resistance, and were driven in utter disorder to the plateau of Rivoli. The recollection of Napoleon's glory was unable to arrest even for a day, on this memorable spot, the rapidity of his fall; Rivoli was abandoned almost as soon as it had been occupied, and the enemy was driven back out of the hills to the very gates of Verona; while two days after, the citadel of Trent, after a short but active siege, surrendered with its garrison of five hundred men.

59. This skillful operation of Hiller, in turning the French line of defence on the Piave, by the mountains, rendered a further retreat indispensable, and soon brought their standards in the plain back to the Adige. To cover this retrograde movement, which was eminently hazardous in the level country in presence of a superior and victorious enemy, the Viceroy on the 31st made a vigorous attack on Bassano, which had fallen into the hands of the Austrians, and the situation of which, at the entrance of the Val Sugana and the defiles of the Brenta, promised to secure the army from molestation on the side where most danger was to be apprehended, and carried the place with a loss to the Austrians of eight hundred men. Thus secured, the Italian army continued its retreat across the plain from the Piave to the Adige, while the grand park of artillery was directed to Valleggio and Padua. On the 4th November the Viceroy's headquarters were established at Verona; the garrisons were withdrawn from Bassano and all the posts to the eastward of that city. Finally, the campaign which had been begun on the Niemen and the Vistula, terminated on the Rhine and the Adige.

60. The withdrawal of the Italian troops, however, behind this river, proved fatal to the French power on the whole eastern shores of the Adriatic. General Nugent, with the left wing of the Austrian army, speedily overran the shores of the gulf of Trieste, and invested that city in the middle of October. The operations, powerfully aided by an English squadron and auxiliary force from Sicily, were

pushed with uncommon vigour; an important outwork, called the Old Powder Magazine, was carried by assault by the combined British and Austrian forces on the 22d; and the breaching batteries being then established, a most vigorous fire was kept up on the citadel, which soon produced such an effect that the works were entirely ruined; and the place, being no longer tenable, surrendered at discretion on the 31st, with twelve hundred men, and very valuable magazines. Nor were the Allies less successful in Dalmatia, where the Austrian troops, powerfully assisted by an insurrection of the inhabitants on the one side, and by the British marines on the other, speedily overcame all resistance. So early as the middle of October, they were masters of all the forts at the mouths of the Cattaro; a fortnight after, the town of Knin was taken by assault; ere long the garrison of Sebenico revolted, and surrendered it to the Austrians; Spalatro was taken the same day, and the entire reduction of the province and eastern shores of the Adriatic effected, by the capture of the strong fortress of Zara, which capitulated, after a severe cannonade of thirteen days, to the combined Austrian and British forces on the 9th December. Meanwhile Palma Nuova was besieged, and Venice invested. The strength, however, of the garrison of the latter city, which, including the marine forces, was twelve thousand strong, and the magnitude of the flotilla, mounting above three hundred guns, which defended the lagunæ and approaches to the Queen of the Adriatic, rendered its reduction a matter of time and difficulty. Yet the whole continental possessions of the old Republic, as far as the Adige, were occupied by the Austrians, whose forces extended to Ferrara and the banks of the Po.

61. Such was the memorable campaign in central Europe of 1813, the most fruitful in great events, and the most momentous in its consequences, which had occurred in the annals of

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mankind. The armies of Cæsar or Scipio would have formed mere *corps d'armée* in its vast array; the forces of Tamerlane or Genghis-khan would have been easily dispersed by a few discharges of its stupendous artillery. Disciplined skill neither appeared there in miniature array as in the Grecian republics, nor barbarian valour under the guidance of unskilled energy as in the hosts of Bajazet or Attila. Civilisation and knowledge had exhausted their resources for the contest; ambition poured forth the accumulations of ages for its support; barbaric valour strained the energy of the desert for the interests it involved. The last reserves, the *arrière-ban* of Europe and Asia, were engaged in the struggle. On the field of battle, beside the Tartars and Bashkirs of the East, were to be seen the tender youth of Europe, only recently torn from the embraces of maternal love; in its maintenance were exhausted all that the military force of France could extort of wealth from the present sufferings of continental Europe, and all that the industry of England had accumulated of credit during past centuries of pacific exertion. Nor were the skill and science of the leaders in this memorable struggle inferior to the prodigious forces they were called to command, or the vital interests for which they contended. The genius of Napoleon, equal to that of Cæsar or Hannibal, all but overbalanced the heroism of Alexander and the science of Gneissau, which rivalled those of Pompey and Scipio; and the cause for which they contended was not the conquest of provinces or the plunder of cities, but the liberation of the human race from unbearable oppression, or the establishment of universal dominion upon an immovable foundation.

62. Great as were the disasters which attended Napoleon in the course of this memorable campaign, and rapid as was the fall of his power during its continuance, it may be doubted whether he ever, on any previous occasion, displayed greater abilities, either in the general conception of his designs, or

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in their rapid and vigorous execution. His system of strategy was the same as it had been at Austerlitz and Jena; and, if it led to very different results, it was only because he was now opposed in a totally different manner, and resisted with a spirit commensurate to the attack. His general ideas for the conduct of the campaign, both in its outset at Lützen and Bautzen, and in its subsequent stages, during the protracted and desperate struggle on the Elbe, were distinguished by all his usual vigour of conception and boldness of execution. And, although the obstinate tenacity with which he clung to that river, involved him latterly in the most dreadful reverses, it is the general, and seems to be the just opinion among his ablest military historians, that, situated as he was, he could not have done better; that it was the last defensible position where the empire of Germany could be maintained; that a retreat to the Rhine, though with undiminished forces, would immediately have been attended by the defection of all the states of the Rhenish Confederacy; and that the risks were well worth incurring, which retained one-half of Europe, in the crisis of his fate, to his standards.*

63. If Napoleon's conduct in tactics, and on the field of battle, during this campaign, is considered, it will often appear worthy of still more unqualified commendation. The admirable rapidity with which he took advantage of his central position on the Elbe, to defeat the formidable assault of the allied sovereigns on Dresden, was equalled by the felicitous conception of the attack next day on both wings of his opponents; a measure unlike

his ordinary tactics, unlooked-for by them, and therefore the more likely to meet with decisive success: while at the same time, from the strength of the fortress in the centre, it was attended with little danger to himself. Though overwhelmed by superior numbers and a moral energy which nothing could withstand at Leipsic, the gallantry of his resistance, the heroism of his troops, are worthy of the most unreserved admiration: the more so that they wanted the stimulus of hope, the recollection of success; and that they fought, at least on the second day, with the mournful conviction that all was lost. Much as we may admire the redoubtable conqueror who struck down his opponents with his iron gauntlet at Austerlitz and Jena, there was as much vigour and resolution displayed on the field of Bautzen, or under the walls of Dresden: the central charge at Wachau was equal to that which decided the fate of Austria at Wagram; the daring intrepidity of the Beresina was again displayed in the forest of Hanau; and if his opponents had been of the same mould on the Elbe that they were at Ulm or Rivoli, the destinies of the world would have been irrevocably decided in his favour on the Saxon plains.

64. Nevertheless, nothing can be more certain than that Napoleon committed the most enormous errors in the course of this campaign, and that his conduct on more than one occasion was such, that if it had occurred on the part of any of his lieutenants, he would have made them lose their heads. In fact, when we recollect that, at the resumption of hostilities in the middle of August, he had four hundred thousand combatants and twelve hundred guns concentrated under his immediate direction on the Elbe,† besides three hundred thousand

* "The abandonment of Dresden and Saxony would have decided the defection of the princes of the Confederation of the Rhine, and enabled all the allied armies to unite on the left bank of the Elbe; a fatal result, which would have taken away his last chance of fortune. On the other hand, by remaining on the Elbe, he had a central point which intercepted all the direct communications of the different allied armies, and put him in a situation to take advantage of any false manœuvres they might fall into, to beat them in detail." — BOURVOULIN, *Camp. de 1813*, 91, 92.

† The warmest panegyrists of Napoleon admit this, and even estimate at a higher amount the total of the military force then at his disposal. "His military power," says Napier, "was rather broken and divided than lessened; for it is certain that the number of men employed in 1813 was infinitely greater than in 1812. In the latter four hundred thousand, but in the former

more who maintained the contest in Italy and Spain; and that, of this immense force, he led back only eighty thousand men and two hundred guns across the Rhine in the beginning of November, we are at a loss, at first sight, to conceive how it was possible, that in so short a time so vast a host, hitherto always victorious (save with England) in pitched battles, could have been so entirely discomfited and overthrown. The killed and wounded, and the prisoners taken in the different battles, will not explain the difficulty, for they did not amount to a third of the number; and although the unheeded ravages of the bivouac and the hospital always cut off more than the sword of the enemy, yet this source of diminution was common to both armies, and could have made no material difference on the fortunes of either. Napoleon managed matters so, that he rendered the prizes of victory enormous beyond all parallel to the conquerors. Thirty thousand prisoners on the spot, and ninety thousand more taken in the fortresses, whom it virtually surrendered to the enemy, constituted the proud trophies of the battle of Leipsic; and, marvellous as were the conquests which followed the thunderbolt of Jena, they were as nothing compared to those which attended the shock of that mighty field, which at one blow prostrated the French empire, and threw back the tricolor flag from the Vistula to the Rhine.

65. The faults in generalship committed by Napoleon during this campaign, were of such a kind as to be inexplicable on any other supposition than that they were the necessary result and natural concomitant of his system of war, when met by a worthy and adequate spirit of resistance on the part of the enemy. We

seven hundred thousand men and twelve hundred field-pieces, were engaged on different points, exclusive of the armies in Spain. Then, on the Vistula, the Oder, and the Elbe, he had powerful fortresses and numerous garrisons, or rather armies, of strength and goodness to re-establish his ascendancy in Europe."—See NAPIER'S *Peninsular War*, v. 431.

have the authority of Marshal St Cyr for the assertion, that the light troops of the Allies, by the manner in which they cut off the foraging parties, and intercepted the communications of the French, did them more injury while on the Elbe than they sustained in all the pitched battles put together; and the chief of Napoleon's engineers, General Rognat, who had access to the whole official documents at headquarters, has stated, that he lost three hundred thousand men by *famine* in Russia in 1812, and one hundred thousand by the same cause in Saxony in 1813.* It is in this incessant wasting away, the necessary result of carrying on a campaign with such enormous multitudes of men, without any adequate magazines or support of a lasting kind, save what they could extract from the suffering population among whom they were placed,—that the real se-

* "The numerous partisans of the enemy committed frightful ravages on our rear: our depots of cavalry were obliged to fall back towards the Rhine to avoid falling into their power; many horses might have been gained to the army, if it had been possible to allow them to take a few days' repose: nothing could make up for the want of subsistence for the troops and replenishing to the parks. It may safely be affirmed, that these detached corps, as numerous as armies in the time of Turenne, commanded by officers skilled in that species of war, did more injury to Napoleon than the grand allied armies, and were sufficient of themselves to have consummated his ruin, if he had not instantly adopted the plan of drawing near to the Rhine. The magazines were so thoroughly exhausted, that soldiers, whom a complete ration of good food could hardly have maintained in health, were reduced from the outset of the campaign to half rations, and even this scanty supply was latterly often not furnished."—St Cyr, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 323, 324.

"From want of magazines, Napoleon suffered to die of famine, in the space of a few months, three hundred thousand men in Russia, and a hundred thousand in Saxony. The soldiers, obliged to separate in search of subsistence, in great part never rejoined their colours: all the bonds of discipline were relaxed; the troops seized every opportunity to disband; the inhabitants of the villages, exasperated by the pillage which went on, rose up and massacred the marauders; and in fine, in the midst of these disorders, the armies disappeared, or perished from misery, especially when the war was prolonged for any considerable time on the same theatre."—ROGNAT, *Chef du Génie de NAPONÉON. Art de la Guerre*, 457.

cret of the destruction of Napoleon's power is to be found. The dreadful typhus fever, which in the close of the campaign swept off such unheard-of multitudes in the fortresses on the Elbe, was the natural consequence of the unexampled privations and misery to which he reduced the gallant conscripts who crowded round his standards.

66. His panegyrists both on this and the other side of the Channel, who follow the bulletins in ascribing his ruin entirely to the rigour of the Russian winter, would do well to explain away the fact proved by the records of the War-office at Paris, that the "morning state" at Wiazma on the 3d November 1812, *four days before the frost began*, exhibited a total of somewhat above fifty-five thousand combatants and twelve thousand horses; the poor remains of three hundred thousand soldiers and eighty thousand cavalry, whom Napoleon had led in person across the Niemen [*ante*, Chap. LXXXI. § 124]. It is neither, therefore, in the rigour of the elements, nor the accidents of fortune, that we are to seek the real causes of Napoleon's overthrow, but in the natural consequences of his system of conquest; in the oppressive effects of the execrable maxim, that war should maintain war; and in the impatience of taxation and thirst for plunder, in the rapacious military Republic of which he formed the head; which, by throwing the armies they had on foot upon external spoliation for their support, at once exposed them, the moment the career of conquest was checked, to unheard-of sufferings, and excited unbounded exasperation among every people over whom their authority prevailed.

67. After making every allowance, however, for the influence of these causes, which, undoubtedly, were mainly instrumental in producing and accelerating the overthrow of the French revolutionary power, it must be admitted that there are some military errors which he committed in this campaign, which are altogether inexplicable. The destruction of Van-

damme's corps, which was the beginning of his long train of disasters, was clearly owing to his imprudence in first ordering him to march on Töplitz, with thirty thousand men, to cut off the retreat of a hundred thousand, and then neglecting to support him when engaged on his perilous mission, by the Young Guard at Pirna. His plan of commencing offensive operations by three armies at the same time, diverging from a centre at Dresden, was, to say the least of it, imprudent and hazardous; for each army was weakened the farther it removed from the central point; and none, in case of disaster, could afford any rapid or immediate support to the others. On leaving the Saxon capital, he deposited his reserve park of artillery and ammunition in Torgau, separated himself from his only considerable magazine on the Elbe, in Magdeburg, and left thirty-five thousand men, who might have cast the balance in his favour in the approaching decisive contest, to stand a siege in Dresden, with seven days' provisions for the men and three for the horses. At Leipsic, he chose a position to fight, which had an impassable morass, traversed only by a single chaussée, in his rear, thereby violating what he himself has told us is the "first requisite for a field of battle, to have no defiles in its rear." When unable to conquer on the first day, he still clung to his ground, though the vast increase of the allied force rendered defeat inevitable; he made no preparation whatever for retreat, and threw no bridges over the Elster, though his engineers could have erected twenty in a single night. And he perilled his crown and his empire in a conflict with greatly superior forces in that dangerous situation, when a hundred and forty thousand of his veteran soldiers were cooped up in the fortresses on the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula, to be the trophy of the conqueror in case of defeat.

68. Inexplicable as these military errors must always appear in so sagacious and clear-sighted a general as Napoleon, they are yet, if minutely considered, nothing more than the

natural and inevitable result of his system of war, when it was once thoroughly understood, and opposed with a vigour commensurate to the attack. He has himself told us, that on many previous occasions he had been in equal danger, from which he had nevertheless extricated himself not only with credit but with decisive success; and the course he pursued on those occasions had been just as perilous as that which, in 1813, proved his ruin. In the marshes of Arcola in 1796; during the advance to Leoben in 1797; in Moravia, previous to the battle of Austerlitz, in 1805; in Poland, after the battle of Eylau, in 1807; on the Danube, after the catastrophe of Aspern, in 1809—he was in equal, if not greater peril; and he extricated himself from the difficulties into which his imprudence had brought him, only by a happy audacity, which paralysed or divided his opponents when they had the means of destroying him absolutely within their grasp. He never thought of retreat; he never anticipated defeat where he was in person with the army—though he provided often carefully for it in the case of his lieutenants: but, dashing boldly forward, he struck at the centre of the enemy's power, without any thought how, in case of disaster, he was to maintain his own. His own words, that “if Alexander had looked to his retreat at Arbela, or Cæsar at Pharsalia, they would never have conquered the world,” reveal the ruling principle of his warfare, and explain at once his early triumphs and ultimate disasters.

69. The wide difference at the two epochs in the result of the same audacious system of warfare, is to be ascribed in a great degree to the superior vigour and unanimity with which he was resisted in the later, to what he had been in the earlier stages of his career. It was the incomparable energy with which the people rose in arms in the latter years of the war, the concord which prevailed among the sovereigns, the perseverance with which they carried through their designs, and the disinterestedness with which they sacrificed all separate interests to the

general objects of the alliance, which led to its glorious results. And without diminishing the credit due to all in this noble career, and admitting that it was on the Russian reserve that the weight of the contest in its last and most serious stages in general fell, justice must yet admit, that the chief glory of the deliverance of Germany is to be ascribed to Prussia; and that, but for the vigour with which her people rose against their oppressors, and which filled the allied ranks with a host of warriors, beyond all precedent great for the amount of its population,* the first onset of Napoleon on the banks of the Elbe never could have been resisted, and the Grand Alliance which effected the deliverance of Europe would never have been formed.

70. “I shall not,” says Gibbon, “be readily accused of fanaticism; yet I must admit that there are often strong appearances of retribution in human affairs.” Had he lived to the present times, and witnessed the extraordinary confirmation of this truth which the Revolutionary contest afforded, his innate candour would probably have extorted a still more unqualified testimony to Supreme superintendence from the great sceptic of the eighteenth century. On the 16th October 1793, at nine o'clock in the morning, Marie Antoinette ascended the fatal scaffold, and revolutionary crime reached its highest point by the murder of a queen and a woman, the noble and unoffending daughter of the Cæsars. On that

* Prussia, after its partition in 1807 by the treaty of Tilsit, possessed only 5,034,000 inhabitants. In 1813, she had 200,000 men in arms, and actually in the field, independent of the landsturm, or, as nearly as possible, one for every *twenty-five souls*. This is the largest proportion that occurred in any state resting on its own resources during the war; for although Great Britain had 800,000 men in arms out of a population not at that period amounting to more than eighteen millions, including that of Ireland; yet of these only 500,000 were regular soldiers and sailors, the others being local militia, who were not permanently drawn from their occupations. One in a hundred in arms is the largest proportion which any country, how warlike soever, has ever been able to keep up for any length of time.—*Ante*, chap. lxxvi. § 20; and LORD CASTLEREAGH'S *Speech*, 17th Nov. 1813: *Parl. Deb.*

day and that hour twenty years—on the 16th October 1813—the discharge of three guns from the allied headquarters announced the commencement of the battle of Leipsic, and the infliction of the greatest punishment on a nation which the history of mankind had exhibited. On the 19th of October 1805, revolutionary ambition beheld its greatest external triumph consummated by the surrender of Mack, with thirty thousand men, to its victorious leader on the heights of Ulm; and on that day eight years—on the 19th October 1813—the final blow was struck for Germany's deliverance by the swords of the Fatherland: thirty thousand prisoners lowered their colours to the victors within the walls of Leipsic; and the mighty conqueror, sad and dejected, was leading back his broken and defeated host to the Rhine. On the 20th October 1805, Napoleon, as the brilliant array of Austrian captives defiled before him, said to those around him, "Gentlemen, this is all well; but I must have greater things than these—I want ships, colonies, and commerce." On the *very next day* after these memorable words

were spoken, on the 21st October 1805, the united navies of France and Spain were destroyed by the arm of Nelson; the maritime war was finished by the thunderbolt of Trafalgar; and "ships, colonies, and commerce" had irrevocably passed over to his enemies.

71. Whether these marvellous coincidences were the result of accident; of that accumulation of great events in the years of the Revolution, which rendered almost every day prolific of historic incident; or formed part of the general design of Providence for the more striking manifestation of its judgments upon the world, they are equally worthy of attention. Whatever may be thought of the coincidence of days, it was no accident which directed the march of events; it was no casual combination of chances which led revolutionary ambition to expiate its sins on the Saxon plains; which let fall in due season the sharpened edge of German retribution; and at the darkest period of the contest, sank the fleets of infidelity in the deep, and righted amidst the waves the destined ark of Christian civilisation.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

FORCING OF THE PYRENEES, AND INVASION OF FRANCE BY WELLINGTON.

1. NOTHING remained after the glorious termination of the battles in the Pyrenees, to complete the expulsion, on the western frontier, of the French from the Spanish territory, but the surrender of Pampeluna; and till that event took place the British general resolved to suspend active operations. But, meanwhile, success deserted the English standards, and unwonted disgrace was incurred in the east of the Peninsula; as if to demonstrate that

victory was still the reward only of persevering and resolute conduct, and to mark, by the force of contrast, what they owed to the chief who had so long apparently chained it to his chariot-wheels.

2. With a view to establish a good base for operations at the mouth of the Ebro, and at the same time hinder Suchet from despatching any succour to resist the general offensive movement which he was meditating in the

north-west of the Peninsula, Wellington directed Sir John Murray, early in May, to embark the great bulk of his troops at Alicante, and attempt a descent near Tarragona; in the hope either of regaining that fortress, or, at all events, of drawing Suchet back for its defence from his advanced position on the Xucar, and withdrawing the beautiful and fertile province of Valencia from the imperial domination. To aid him in its reduction, a powerful battering-train of fifty guns was placed at his disposal; and as Admiral Hallowell, with a squadron of the Mediterranean fleet was at hand, both to facilitate the disembarkation and aid in the operations, it was hoped they would prove successful, before an adequate French force could be collected from beyond the Ebro to raise the siege. The troops placed at Murray's disposal for this purpose were very considerable, consisting of the British and foreign divisions which had come from Sicily, Whittingham's and Roche's Spaniards, and the most efficient part of Elío's and the Duke del Parque's armies. But the first only were to be embarked for Catalonia; the latter being left to threaten the French positions covering Valencia on the Xucar. The forces embarked at Alicante were somewhat above fourteen thousand, of which eight thousand were British and German foot, and fifteen hundred British and German cavalry and artillery; the remainder being Spanish and Sicilian infantry.*

3. This army embarked at Alicante on the 31st May, and arrived with a fair wind in the neighbourhood of Tarragona on the 3d June, where it was immediately landed by the active co-operation of Admiral Hallowell, the intrepid captain of the *Swiftsure* at the Nile [*ante*, Chap. xxvi. § 58]. They had thus entirely gained the start of Suchet, who could not possibly be up for ten days to come, for he had a hundred and sixty miles to march; and meanwhile the besiegers, with the ample means at their disposal, might make themselves masters of Tarragona, the works of which were in a very dilapi-

dated state, and which was defended by only sixteen hundred men. Fort Olivo, the scene of such desperate conflicts during the former siege [*ante*, Chap. Lxv. §§ 73, 74], was occupied, as well as the heights of Loretto, without resistance, the first day. An expedition was at the same time despatched under Colonel Prevost to attack San Felipe de Balaguer, a strong fort perched on a rock, which commanded and blocked up the only carriage-road from Tortosa to Tarragona: and the fire of two mortars, which were with great difficulty brought up to bear on the fort, having blown up its magazine, the governor surrendered at discretion, with two hundred and sixty men. This early success greatly elevated the spirits of the allied army, and they confidently anticipated the immediate capture of the main fortress; for its outworks, incomplete, ill-flanked, without palisades or casemates, could not have withstood a vigorous attack; and once taken, a few hours' breaching with the noble battering-train which they possessed, would have brought down the wall of the town, and a general assault might have been made with every prospect of success.

4. But the leader is the soul of an army, and no valour or skill on the part of the officers and men employed, can supply the want of resolute determination on the part of the general-in-chief. There is no reason to doubt the personal courage of Sir John Murray; but he proved himself destitute of the rarer qualities of firm resolution, moral courage, and confidence in his followers, which are indispensable in a commander. His troops were brave; and such was the spirit with which they were animated, that an Italian regiment which at Alicante had been ready to go over to the enemy, now volunteered to head the assault on Fort-Royal. But the general was far from sharing the confidence of his followers; he had despaired of victory even in the moment of glorious triumph at Castalla, and he was not likely to be more sanguine when in front of the bastions of Tarragona. The operations were by no means

* See Appendix E, Chap. LXXXIII.

pushed with the rapidity which circumstances required, and the ample means at his disposal rendered practicable. The guns, though close at hand, were not put into the batteries till the 11th; and though the order to assault the outworks was given that night, it was countermanded: instructions for embarking the guns were given, and, when half executed, likewise countermanded. Thus the precious time, when the place might have been carried, was lost in irresolution; and meanwhile intelligence of the approach of formidable bodies to raise the siege, completed the embarrassment of the English general. On the 11th, eight thousand French, under Maurice Mathieu, began their march from Barcelona, and intelligence was received that Suchet was approaching the Col de Balaguer from Valencia with nine thousand more, driving before him Copons' mountain bands, who had drawn into the neighbourhood of Tarragona. Murray had twenty thousand men, whereof one-half were British and Germans, on whom reliance could be placed; but instead of pushing the siege with this respectable force, which would have taken the place before either army could have got up, the English general gave orders for the embarkation of the troops and battering-train. It began on the 12th, and was not completed till next day, when the French had not yet arrived even within sight of Tarragona. The soldiers and sailors could not conceal their indignation at abandoning the guns, nineteen in number, which were left in the advanced batteries—for they were part of the time-honoured train which had torn down the ramparts of Badajoz.*

* Murray after this disaster was deprived of the command, and, when he returned to England, was brought to a court-martial after the peace, which acquitted him of the serious charges preferred against him for his conduct on the occasion, but found him guilty of want of judgment. There was no harm in this; vindictive prosecutions are of no service in military affairs; it is the judgment of posterity which is the real reward or punishment of public conduct. Sir John was a man of talent, and had many estimable qualities in private: the fault lay in his appointment to a public situation for which he was wholly disqualified.

5. After the troops had got on board, Murray disembarked part of them near Balaguer, in hope of cutting off a French brigade which lay there; but, finding it had escaped, he again put to sea, and steered for Alicante, while Copons retired with his Spaniards into the mountains, and the French entered Tarragona amidst the shouts of the garrison. Soon afterwards Lord William Bentinck arrived from Sicily, and took the command. A violent storm, which overtook the fleet and wrecked some of the transports, prevented the soldiers being all disembarked before the 27th; and meanwhile, Elio and the Duke del Parque, with twenty-five thousand men, attacked, in two columns, Habert, who with nine thousand maintained the line of the Xucar; but they were defeated at both their points of attack with the loss each of some hundred men. Thus everything seemed disastrous on the eastern coast; and, to complete the untoward state of affairs, Lord William Bentinck had come alone from Sicily, fearing a descent from Murat in that island; although, after having entered into secret negotiations with the Allies, he soon after set out for Saxony, where, as already mentioned, he bore an important part in the battle of Dresden.

6. But the triumphs of the French were not of long duration. On the 27th, intelligence was received of the battle of Vittoria, accompanied by orders, which were a necessary consequence of that event, for Suchet entirely to evacuate Valencia, and retire behind the Ebro. He immediately made preparations for abandoning the province, and left Valencia with a heavy heart on the 5th July, which was entered four days afterwards by Lord William Bentinck. But, faithful to the positive instructions of Napoleon to keep a tenacious grasp of all his conquests, he left twelve hundred men in Saguntum, five hundred in Peniscola, and four thousand five hundred in Tortosa—a fatal error, the counterpart of the Emperor's obstinate retention of the fortresses on the Elbe and the Oder during the German campaign, and to which, more than to any other cause,

the little subsequent success of Suchet in the field is to be ascribed. It was Suchet's first intention, when he retired behind the Ebro, to have marched upon Saragossa, and, forming a respectable force with the troops left in that province, to have united with Clausel, and together threatened the right flank of Wellington. But the rapid retreat of Clausel from Saragossa, by Jaca, into France, totally disconcerted this well-conceived project. The plain of Aragon being entirely inundated with guerillas, while Wellington's masses in Navarre were on its flank, he felt it necessary to concentrate his forces in Catalonia and on the Lower Ebro, and, accordingly, gave orders for the evacuation of Saragossa and the fortresses of Aragon, the troops retiring to Mequinenza, Lerida, and Tortosa.

7. Bentinck followed with the Anglo-Sicilian army; but it was soon found by the British general that, though his forces were of considerable numerical amount, yet they were not of such a composition as to enable him to hazard offensive operations without the utmost caution beyond the Ebro. He had, indeed, thirty thousand men nominally under his orders; but of these the British and Germans, not quite ten thousand strong, could alone be trusted in presence of the enemy. Elio and Roche, with ten thousand more, were at Valencia in a very destitute condition; the Duke del Parque, with twelve thousand, was several marches in the rear; and his troops, though paid by British subsidies, were, from the inherent vice of procrastination common to all the Spaniards, almost as unprovided as the former. Decaens, however, at this moment was himself in nearly as difficult a situation; for the news of the battle of Vittoria had again roused all the upper valleys of Catalonia; and the insurrection, nourished by supplies from the English fleet, was making rapid progress. Thus neither party were in a condition to undertake any operation of importance; and though Suchet had sixty-eight thousand of the best troops of the empire at his com-

mand, they were so scattered over the numerous fortified posts and cities which the Emperor had ordered him to garrison and maintain, that he was little more than a match in the field for Bentinck with his motley array of thirty thousand.

8. The evacuation of Aragon and Valencia, like that of all the other places which had been under the dominion of the French armies, revealed the extraordinary system of forced contributions and organised plunder, by which they had so long succeeded in maintaining their ascendancy in Europe without any sensible addition to the burdens of France itself. Immediately after the occupation of Valencia in the end of 1811, the French marshal, as already mentioned, had imposed an extraordinary contribution of 200,000,000 reals, or about £2,000,000 sterling, a burden equal, if the value of money be taken into consideration, to at least £5,000,000 in Great Britain. The half of this enormous requisition entirely exhausted the whole money, gold, silver plate, and jewels of the province, and the remainder was taken in grain, stuffs, clothing, and other articles necessary for the subsistence of the troops. Next year the burden was fixed at 70,000,000 reals, or £700,000, equal in like manner to £1,750,000 in England; but by the vigour of the French marshal's government, and the regularity and justice of his rule in the distribution and exaction of these enormous burdens, nearly the whole was brought, chiefly in kind, into the imperial treasury.

9. Aragon at first, after the capture of its capital, had been subjected to enormous burdens, great part of which was irrecoverable from their excessive magnitude; but from the time that the regular government of Suchet began, the impositions were more uniform, and amounted to about four times what the province had paid in the most flourishing days of the old monarchy. While these facts illustrate in the clearest manner the oppressive nature of the imperial government, and explain the unbounded exasperation which it everywhere excited

in Europe, as well as the long enthusiasm which it awakened in France itself, it must at the same time be added, to the honour of Marshal Suchet, that he carried this onerous system into execution with far more attention to the interests and wishes of the inhabitants than any of the other French marshals. No private plunder disgraced his footsteps, no military disorders rendered hateful his government. Unlike the other parts of Spain, the monuments of the fine arts remained untouched in Valencia during his administration; and, despite the grievous weight of the burdens he was obliged to impose, such was the protection to industry which he simultaneously afforded, that the receding of the footsteps of the French army was beheld with regret by the grateful inhabitants.

10. Bentinck long hesitated whether he should commence active operations in Catalonia with the siege of Tortosa or that of Tarragona; but he at length determined on the latter, chiefly in consequence of the facilities for carrying it on which the vicinity of the sea and the Mediterranean squadron afforded. Having crossed the Ebro, accordingly, he sat down before the place in the end of July with ten thousand good troops; while the Spanish armies, about twenty thousand more, but of a very different quality, were drawn to the neighbourhood to cover the siege. Suchet was long unable to collect any sufficient force to interrupt his operations; but having at length formed a junction with Decaens, he advanced at the head of thirty thousand men to raise the siege. Bentinck was at the head of an equal force, but upon the Spaniards no reliance could be placed; and he therefore wisely declined battle, retreating to the defiles of the Hospitalat, near the Col de Balaguer. Suchet, without pursuing him, passed on to Tarragona, which he entered on the 18th, and immediately blew up the fortifications and brought away the garrison. Such was the strength of the ancient masonry, the work of the Romans, that it was with no small time and labour that the demolition was ef-

fectcd. Having destroyed these renowned bastions, the French general retired to the neighbourhood of Villa Franca and the Llobregat, while Decaens was sent into Upper Catalonia; and Tarragona, with its ruined battlements and fertile fields, was occupied by the British forces.

11. Gradually after this the British army gained ground, and the French were cooped up into more contracted limits within the war-wasted province of Catalonia. On the 5th September, the advance entered Villa Franca, and Suchet retired altogether into the Llobregat, leaving Tortosa, Lerida, and Mequinenza, now blockaded by the Spanish troops, to their own resources. An event, however, ere long occurred, which showed that it was not without reason that Bentinck, with his heterogeneous array of troops, had hitherto avoided a general engagement with the admirable veterans of Suchet. On the 12th September, twelve hundred German and British infantry, with two British and two Spanish guns, under Colonel Adam, and three battalions of Sarsfield's Catalonians, occupied, twelve miles in advance of Villa Franca, the position of Ordal, a ridge which rises gradually from a deep and impassable ravine, crossed by a noble bridge in front. Suchet, hearing that this advanced guard, not more in all than three thousand men, was not adequately supported, conceived the design of cutting it off. For this purpose the divisions Harispe and Habert were put in motion at nightfall, by bright moonlight passed the bridge without resistance, and at midnight suddenly attacked the allied advanced guard at all points. The second battalion of the 27th, who were on the right, were first assaulted; but the men, who were lying beside their muskets in battle array, instantly started up and fought fiercely; and the Spaniards and Germans, who were next attacked in the centre, made a most gallant resistance. Harispe's men, however, crossing the bridge in great numbers, ere long turned the allied flank; Adam was wounded early; Colonel Reeves, who was second in command, was also soon

struck down; and amidst the confusion of a nocturnal combat, the troops, without any recognised leader, fought with great fury in detached bodies, but without any general plan. At length the Spaniards in the centre were broken, the 27th regiment turned and forced, and the whole dispersed, four guns being taken. Captain Waldron, with eighty of the 27th, and Captain Muller, with the like number of Germans, effected their retreat by the hills; but all the rest were dispersed or slain, and the actual loss was not less than a thousand men.

12. Encouraged by this blow, which seems to have been induced by undue confidence on the part of both Bentinck and Adam, in thus exposing an advanced guard without support to the blows of superior bodies of the enemy, Suchet pursued his march, and came up at eight o'clock with the main allied army near Villa Franca. But they retreated in admirable order, and a charge of the French cavalry was stopped with remarkable resolution by Lord Frederick Bentinck, at the head of the 28th dragoons and German horse. That gallant officer engaged in single combat and wounded Colonel Myers of the French horse, and defeated the cavalry with the loss of three hundred men. Great numbers of the missing at the pass of Ordal, who had been supposed to be taken, rejoined their colours two days afterwards; but this disaster had the effect of causing the allied army to retire to the neighbourhood of Tarragona, while the Catalonians fell back to Igualada. Although the operations in the east of Spain were thus checkered with misfortune, yet they had a most important effect on the issue of the campaign, and clearly demonstrated on what erroneous principles Napoleon's defensive system of retaining garrisons in so many fortresses was founded. For during a period when Soult was pressed by superior forces in the western Pyrenees, and France itself was menaced with invasion, sixty-eight thousand of the best soldiers of the French empire were kept in check by ten thousand British and German troops, sup-

ported by twice that number of ill-disciplined Spaniards; all pressure on Wellington's right flank from that formidable body was prevented, and the whole of Valencia and half of Catalonia were rescued from their grasp by a motley array, which could not for three days have kept the field in presence of Suchet's united forces.

13. Meanwhile Wellington, having completed his preparations, and received considerable reinforcements both from England and the hospitals, from whence the wounded men were discharged in such extraordinary numbers, and with such rapidity, under the influence of the mental excitement produced by continued and glorious success,* as to excite the astonishment of the whole army, was taking measures for an invasion of France. He was desirous, indeed, not to hazard that attempt at the present moment, for several reasons:—Pampeluna, though again closely blockaded, and now severely distressed for provisions, had not yet fallen; and till that event took place, not only could the blockading forces not be reckoned on to support the allied army in its advance, but he himself could not be considered as solidly established on the Spanish frontier. The Spanish troops who were acting in co-operation with his army were fully forty thousand, and they had now acquired, from having served for some time with the Anglo-Portuguese forces, a far higher degree of consistence and efficiency than they had ever before attained during the war. But still there were many circumstances in their condition which rendered them likely to prove at least as dangerous as serviceable to an invading army.

* "We have gained on the strength of the 76th, 84th, and 85th regiments, 1797 rank and file, and 800 recruits; and 500 British and 1500 Portuguese from the hospitals last week, and we are gaining some every day. We are now as strong as we were on the 25th July, before the battles of the Pyrenees, and in a short time we shall be within 5000 or 6000 as strong as we were before the battle of Vittoria. The troops are uncommonly healthy, indeed there is no sickness amongst them."—WELLINGTON to LORD BATHURST, 25th August 1813; GURWOOD, xi. 45.

14. In spite of all the representations of Wellington, which had been as energetic as they were innumerable, the government at Cadiz, wholly engrossed with democratic ambition, had taken no efficient steps to provide for their armies. They were neither clothed nor paid, and in great part depended for their subsistence upon the British rations; and there was too good reason to fear, that if they entered France they would rouse a national resistance, by the licence with which they might retaliate upon its inhabitants the misery which their own countrymen had so long suffered at the hands of the enemy. The Cortes, inflamed almost to madness by the incessant efforts of the republican press at Cadiz, who now dreaded nothing so much as the success of the allied arms, did all in their power to thwart the designs of Wellington for the common

* "Nec minus periculi, ex magnâ famâ, quam ex malâ."—TACITUS. Envy is a passion second only in extent to selfishness, to which it is twin brother in human nature, and its effects are far more general than is commonly supposed.

† "More than half of Spain has been cleared of the enemy above a year; and the whole of Spain, excepting Catalonia and a small part of Aragon, since the months of May and June last. The most abundant harvest has been reaped in all parts of the country; millions of money, spent by contending armies in the Peninsula, are circulating everywhere; and yet your armies, however weak in numbers, are literally starving. The allied British and Portuguese army under my command, have been subsisted—particularly latterly—almost exclusively upon the magazines imported by sea; and I am concerned to inform your Excellency, that besides money for the pay of all the armies, which has been given from the military chest of the British army, and has been received from no other quarter, the British magazines have supplied quantities of provisions to all the Spanish armies, in order to enable them to remain in the field at all; and, notwithstanding this assistance, I have had the mortification of seeing the Spanish troops on the outposts obliged to plunder the nut and apple trees for subsistence; and to know that the Spanish troops, employed in the blockade of Pampeluna and Santona, were striving upon half an allowance of bread, while the enemy whom they were blockading, were, at the same time, receiving their full allowance.

"It cannot be pretended that the country does not produce the means of maintaining the number of men necessary for its defence; those means are undoubtedly superabund-

ant. The excesses at San Sebastian afforded too plausible a ground, which was amply taken advantage of, for inflaming the popular passions against the English general; they were represented as not the desigulous work of the unbridled soldiers, but as the deliberate attempt of a heretical nation to destroy a mercantile community, of which they were jealous. Wellington himself was openly accused of aspiring to the crown of Spain: his character was too great, his achievements had been too glorious, not to excite the most vehement envy among all the base of the realm he had delivered.* To such a height did these malignant recriminations rise, that he more than once offered to resign the supreme command;† and, despairing of success with such lukewarm or treacherous allies, advised the British government to demand San Sebastian as a hostage,

and; and the enemy has proved that armies can be maintained in Spain at the expense of the Spanish nation, infinitely longer than are necessary for its defence.

"Sir, the fact is notorious, that there is no authority in the country to enforce the law and the due payment of the contributions to government; and the officers of the Hacienda do not perform their duty.

"They are infinitely more numerous than is necessary, and their maintenance exhausts the revenues which ought to be employed in the maintenance of the troops on the frontiers. I have sent to your Excellency's office proofs that some branches of the revenue cost 70 and 80 per cent to collect them.

"It must be obvious to your Excellency that matters cannot go on long as they are. The winter is approaching, and no magazines, or other provision of any kind, have been made for the Spanish troops, who, as I have above stated, have not at present even enough for their daily subsistence."—WELLINGTON to the Spanish Minister at War, 30th August 1813: *Guarwood*, vol. xi. pp. 56, 58.

"Our character is involved in a greater degree than we are aware of in the democratic transactions of the Cortes, in the opinion of all moderate and well-thinking Spaniards, and, I am afraid, with the rest of Europe; and if the mob of Cadiz begin to move heads from shoulders, as the newspapers have threatened Castanos, and the assembly seize upon landed property to supply their necessities, I am afraid we must do something more than discountenance them.

"It is quite impossible that such a system can last. What I regret is, that I am the person that maintains it. If I was out of the way, there are plenty of generals who

and, if refused, to withdraw their forces altogether from the Peninsula.

15. Although the British government were far from being insensible to the cogency of these arguments, yet they wisely determined to follow Wellington's advice, in cautiously abstaining from all interference with the Regency and Cortes at Cadiz, how criminal or absurd soever their conduct might be, and to bend all their efforts to the vigorous prosecution of the war. But they were induced, by other considerations of still higher importance, to urge their general to undertake the immediate invasion of the south of France. The coalition in Germany, they were well aware, was still very nearly matched by Napoleon; the disasters at Dresden had well-nigh dissolved its heterogeneous materials; and therefore so important an event as the invasion of France by the British forces, might be expected to produce a moral effect of the greatest importance throughout Europe. Wellington, who at that period had little confidence in the stability of the Grand Alliance, and looked, not without reason, to the security of the Peninsula as the main object of his efforts, was desirous that his troops, or a principal part of them, should be turned against Suchet in Catalonia, in order that, during the absence of Napoleon with the greater part of his forces in Germany, the important strongholds in that province, an effectual barrier against France in the east, might be recovered to the Spanish monarchy. But the English government, having

in view the general interests of Europe, and the probable effect of the measure on the determination of the allied sovereigns on the Elbe, decided otherwise. The invasion of France, even before Pampeluna had fallen, was resolved on; and Wellington, like a good soldier, set himself to execute, to the best of his ability, an offensive campaign, which on military principles he deemed premature.

16. Soult's position on the northern side of the Bidassoa consisted of the base of a triangle, of which Bayonne was the apex, and the great roads running from thence to Irun on the sea-coast, and St Jean Pied-de-Port in the interior, were the sides. The interior of this triangle was filled with a mass of rugged and in great part inaccessible mountains, affording little means of subsistence to troops, and presenting at every step huge cliffs and passes capable of arresting an invading army. The French army was stationed on the summit of the southern ridge of this wild and rocky district, which immediately overlooks the valley of the Bidassoa, and various parts of it were strengthened with fieldworks. The summit of the Rhune mountain—the highest part of the ridge, terminating in a peak, surrounded on three sides by inaccessible precipices, and to be reached only from the eastward by a long narrow shelf on the top of the rocks—was crowned with a complete redoubt. All the hill-roads which penetrated through this strong position were commanded by works, the greater part of which were nearly com-

would overturn it. Ballasteros positively intended it; and I am much mistaken if O'Donnell, and even Castanos, and probably others, are not equally ready. If the King should return, he also will overturn the whole fabric, if he has any spirit; but things have gone so far, and the gentlemen of Cadiz are so completely masters of their trade of managing that assembly, that I am afraid there must be another convulsion; and I earnestly recommend to the British government to keep themselves clear of the democracy, and to interfere in nothing while the government is in their hands, excepting in carrying on the war, and keeping out the foreign enemy."—WELLINGTON to EARL BATHURST, 6th September 1813; GURWOOD, vol. xi. pp. 90, 91.

"In consequence of the existing regency of Spain having departed from all the engagements entered into with me by the late regency after repeated personal discussions, and notwithstanding that I had received what I conceived was a confirmation of the engagements, and a declaration to adhere to them by the existing regency, I thought it proper, on the 8th August last, to resign the command of the Spanish armies, which resignation I have been informed by a despatch from the Minister at War, of the 22d of September, has been accepted by the regency, and I continue to exercise the command only till the new Cortes shall have been assembled."—WELLINGTON to EARL BATHURST, 6th October 1813; GURWOOD, vol. xi. p. 164.

pleted; and the position, flanked by the sea on the one side, and by the Rhune mountain, which rises to the height of two thousand eight hundred feet, and overlooks all the neighbouring hills, on the other, could hardly be turned on either side.

17. Wellington, nevertheless, determined to hazard an attack, and he first intended to have made it in the middle of September, immediately after the castle of San Sebastian fell; but the excessive storms of rain which afterwards came on, and swelled the Bidassoa into a raging torrent, rendered it impossible to attempt the crossing of the fords till the beginning of October; and the state of the tides, upon which the threading through them was mainly dependent, would not permit the passage being attempted till the 7th of that month. Soult, not expecting that Wellington would attempt to force his strong position in this quarter, had not above fifteen thousand men immediately above the Bidassoa; as in truth he did not regard the heights in front as the principal part of his position. It was in the fortifications on the Nive in their rear that the principal strength of the position lay, by which he hoped to prevent the invasion of the south of France. The French general had recently been joined by sixteen thousand new conscripts, who were distributed among the veteran corps of the army; so that his numerical force was little inferior to what it had been before the battles of the Pyrenees. But this accession of force was fully counterbalanced on the allied side by the arrival of three thousand fresh troops from England, and the approach of the Andalusian army of reserve under the Conde d'Abisbal, fully twelve thousand strong, which bore an important part in the action that followed.

18. The troops which Wellington employed in the attack were very considerable, and proportioned rather to the strength of the enemy's position, than to the actual force he had at his command to defend it. Graham, having with him the first and fifth divisions, Lord Aylmer's brigade, and a

brigade of Portuguese, commanded the left wing, and received orders to cross the Bidassoa by the fords immediately above and below the site where the bridge on the great road from Paris to Madrid formerly stood; Freyre, with his Spaniards, was to cross by the Biratu fords, and storm the intrenched camp on the heights above them; Major-General Alten, with the light division and Longa's Spaniards, was to cross the upper fords, and attack the Bayonette mountain and the pass of Vera; while on the right the army of reserve of Andalusia, under the command of General Giron, was to attack the enemy's posts on the mountain of La Rhune, while the fourth and sixth divisions were in reserve to support him, if necessary.* Altogether, the English general directed twenty-four thousand men against the Lower Bidassoa, and twenty thousand against the Rhune mountain and its adjacent ridges.

19. The night preceding the attack was unusually stormy and tempestuous. A thunder-storm rolled down from the summit of the Rhune mountain, and broke with the utmost violence on the French positions on the Lower Bidassoa. During the darkness and storm, Wellington advanced a number of his guns up to the heights of San Marcial, while the troops and pontoons were brought down, still unperceived, close to Fontarabia and Irun, at the mouth of the Bidassoa. At the same time the columns which were to cross over farther up, moved close to the respective points of passage, which were no less than ten in number, in order to be able simultaneously to commence the attack on the French position. All the tents of the allied army on the hills were left standing, and the pontoons, which had been brought down to the water's edge, were carefully concealed from the enemy's view. At seven o'clock Lord Aylmer's brigade, which led the advance on the left extremity of the left wing, suddenly emerged from behind their screen of hills, and advanced with a rapid pace towards the

* See Appendix F, Chap. LXXXIII.

sands adjoining Fontarabia, and immediately all the guns on the heights of San Marcial commenced their fire along the whole line. So completely were the enemy taken by surprise, that Marshal Soult was passing troops in review in the centre of his position, at the moment when the first guns were heard at the Lower Bidassoa.

20. He immediately set out at the gallop in that direction; but before he could arrive in its vicinity, the positions had been carried, and the British were solidly established in the French territory. From the summit of San Marcial seven columns could be seen descending rapidly from the heights, and advancing with beautiful precision and a rapid step towards the fords of the Bidassoa. Those on the upper parts of the stream descended at once into the enemy's fire; but those on the lower wound like huge snakes through the level sands, and were in some places almost immersed in water before they reached the firm ground on the opposite side. But the surprise was complete, and the enemy on the heights opposite made no very strenuous resistance. Several redoubts on the sandhills were taken, and seven pieces of cannon captured. A much more obstinate resistance was made, however, at the mountain of Louis the Fourteenth, and the heights of the Croix des Bouquets, which was the key to the whole position in that quarter, and towards which both parties brought up their troops and guns with the greatest rapidity. The Germans, who first made the attack on this point, were repulsed with severe loss; but the 9th regiment, under Colonel Cameron, at this moment came up, and stormed the post with the utmost gallantry; the French falling back at all points, and in great confusion, on the high-road towards Bayonne; and it was only by the arrival of Soult at this moment, with the reserve and several guns, that order was in part restored. Meanwhile Freyre had also carried the camp of Biratu after a hard struggle.

21. While this rapid and important success was achieved on the left, Alten,

with the light division, having forded the river, attacked the enemy's intrenchments in the pass of Vera; and Giron, with the Andalusians, was led against the mountain of La Rhune. Taupin's division guarded the stupendous rocks in front of the Allies which were to be assailed; while the sixth division, under Cole, which was posted on the heights of St Barbara, formed an imposing reserve, full in view of the French troops, and ready to co-operate at a moment's warning in the attack. The French soldiers in this quarter were posted on the summit of enormous rocky ridges, one of which, called by the soldiers the Boar's Back, projected like a huge redoubt far into the valley of Beira. No sooner, however, did Clausel, who commanded there, hear the first cannon-shots on the Lower Bidassoa, than he hurried four regiments up to the summit of the Great Rhune, and advanced with the remainder of his forces to the support of Taupin on the ridges beneath. But before he could arrive, the action in that quarter was decided. Soon after seven o'clock, the Boar's Back was assailed at both ends; at its eastern extremity—that is, on the British right—by Giron's Andalusians, and on its left, towards the British centre, by Kempt's brigade; whilst Colonel Colborne, at the head of his brigade, consisting of the 52d, 95th, and some Portuguese battalions of light troops, advanced against the Bayonette mountain on the British left. Ere long the slopes of the mountains were covered with men and fire, while the dark forests at the bottom of the ravines were filled with volumes of white smoke, that came curling up out of their inmost recesses. The Boar's Back was soon carried, and the troops then rushed on to the assault of the interior range, consisting of the Bayonette mountain and the pass of Vera.

22. The Portuguese Caçadores were the first who made the attack; but they were overmatched by the French, who, rushing out of the redoubt at the summit, hurled them over the rocky slopes with great violence. In the middle, however, of their pursuit,

the 52d regiment suddenly emerged from the wood, and startled the victorious French by the apparition of the red uniforms. At this sight the pursuers wavered and fled, closely followed by the British regiment, who entered the redoubt with them. Following up his success, Colborne next attacked the second intrenchment, which was carried with equal impetuosity, and four hundred prisoners were taken. Meanwhile Giron's Spaniards, on the right, had also worked their way with great difficulty up the eastern end of the Boar's Back, and stormed some intrenchments which the enemy had thrown up in that quarter on the Saddle Ridge beyond it. They were repulsed, however, in the attack of the strong position of the Hermitage on the Great Rhune mountain, from the summit of which the enemy rolled down immense rocks, which made huge gaps in the assailing companies. On this rugged height the French succeeded in maintaining themselves all night; but as soon as the mist had cleared away on the following morning, Wellington directed an attack by Giron's Spaniards by the eastern ridge, which alone was accessible. This important and difficult operation was performed with the utmost gallantry by the Andalusians, who drove the enemy from one fortified post in the rugged slopes to another, till the Great Rhune itself was in a manner environed by enemies. Clausel upon this, fearful of being cut off, drew off his regiments from that elevated position in the night; and on the following morning the whole ridge occupied by the enemy, from the summit of La Rhune to the sea-coast, was in the hands of the Allies.

23. Though not so celebrated as some of his other achievements, there is none which reflects more lustre on Wellington as a general than this extraordinary action. With assiduous care, the French had for more than a month fortified their mountain position in the Pyrenees; it was guarded by an army as numerous, so far as the regular troops on either side were concerned, as that of the British general; and

the heights on which the French were placed, far exceeded the far-famed steepes of Torres Vedras in strength and ruggedness. From this all but impregnable position they had been driven in a single day, by an enemy who, to reach it, had to ford a difficult and dangerous river, forming, as it were, a vast wet ditch to the intrenchment. Great as was the spirit evinced by the whole troops, Spanish as well as British or Portuguese, who had been engaged, it was not by their efforts alone that the battle was won. It was the combinations of the general which rendered their attacks irresistible. It was the secrecy of his preparations, and the suddenness of his onset, which carried the enemy's position on the Lower Bidassoa. It was the admirable combinations which threw an overwhelming force against the rocks in the centre, which won the dizzy heights of La Rhune. In defence of their rocky intrenchments, the French were far from displaying their wonted spirit and vigour; and, what is very remarkable, the same troops who had ascended with so intrepid a step the crags of Soraoren, now abandoned with little resistance the loftier rocks of the Bayonette—a remarkable proof of the old observation, that the soldiers of that nation are much better adapted for offensive than defensive warfare, and an illustration of how much the courage of the bravest troops may be lowered by a long series of defeats. In this battle the Allies lost about sixteen hundred men, of whom one-half were Spaniards. The French were weakened by not more than fourteen hundred, their troops, during the greater part of the fighting, being protected by the intrenchments which they defended. But this was of little consequence. The enemy's intrenched position, upon which they had so long laboured, had been lost; the territory of the Great Nation was violated; and a vast hostile army, for the first time since the Revolution, was permanently encamped within the territory of France. And thus was England, which throughout the contest had been the most persevering and resolute of all

the opponents of the Revolution, and whose government had never yet either yielded to the victories or acknowledged the chiefs which it had placed at the head of affairs, the first of all the powers of Europe which succeeded in planting its victorious standards on the soil of France.

24. The first care of Wellington, after the army was established within the French territory, was to use the most vigorous measures to prevent plundering on the part of his troops, and to establish that admirable system of paying regularly for the supplies of the army, which, as much as the bravery of the British soldiers, had contributed to his previous successes. The better to effect these objects, he issued a noble proclamation to his men, in which, after recounting the incalculable miseries which the exactions of the French soldiers had brought upon Spain and Portugal, he declared that it would be unworthy of a great nation to retaliate these miseries upon the innocent inhabitants of France, and therefore that plundering and every species of excess would be rigorously punished, and supplies of every kind paid for with the same regularity as they had been in the Peninsular kingdoms.* Neither the Spanish troops nor the French peasantry at first gave any credit to this proclamation, so utterly at variance was it with the system by which the former had been accustomed to suffer, and the latter to

profit, during the Peninsular campaigns. But Wellington was at once serious in his intention, and resolute in his determination; and he soon gave convincing proof of both by instantly hanging several soldiers, both British and Spanish, who were detected in the act of pillaging. At the same time, the perfect regularity with which supplies of all kinds were paid for with ready money in the English camp, awakened the covetous feelings of the French mountaineers, who hastened to profit by the prolific stream of war, which, fortunately for them, had entered their valleys. Simultaneously with this, fourteen French peasants, who had been taken near the pass of Echalar firing on the British troops, were conducted to Passages as prisoners of war, where they were embarked for the British Islands. The effect of this stroke was incalculable; for the peasants could not deny its justice, or accuse the British general of harshness when treating them as prisoners of war; while at the same time the idea of being carried to England, appeared like an exile to the world's end to these simple mountaineers. Thus, impelled by terror on the one hand, and attracted by love of gain on the other, the peasantry generally laid aside all feelings of hostility, and the English dollars succeeded in revealing stores of subsistence in the mountains, which all the rigour of the French requisitions had been unable to discover.†

* "The officers and soldiers of the army must recollect that their nations are at war with France, solely because the ruler of the French nation will not allow them to be at peace, and is desirous of forcing them to submit to his yoke; and they must not forget that the worst of evils suffered by the enemy, in his profligate invasion of Spain and Portugal, have been occasioned by the irregularities of the soldiers, and their cruelties, authorised and encouraged by their chiefs, towards the unfortunate and peaceful inhabitants of the country.

"To revenge this conduct on the peaceful inhabitants of France would be unmanly, and unworthy of the nations to whom the commander of the forces now addresses himself; and, at all events, would be the occasion of similar and worse evils to the army at large, than those which the enemy's army have suffered in the Peninsula, and

would eventually prove highly injurious to the public interests.

"The rules, therefore, which have been observed hitherto in requiring, and taking, and giving receipts for supplies from the country, are to be continued in the villages on the French frontier; and the commissioners attached to each of the armies of the several nations will receive the orders from the commander-in-chief of the army of their nations respecting the mode and period of paying for such supplies."—WELLINGTON'S Proclamation, 8th October 1813; GURWOOD. xi. p. 1.

† "The system which the Allies adopted on entering France, was eminently calculated to render the inhabitants favourable to their operations; money, the sinews of war, was as abundant with them as it was wanting with us: they scattered it abroad with profusion, and took nothing without paying

25. What rendered the impression of this conduct the greater upon the French peasantry, was the wide contrast which the measures of their enemies thus presented to the system which was at the same time pursued by their own defenders in the French army. The Revolutionary generals, now for the first time thrown back upon the territory of France, had no means, which the government of Paris would sanction, of providing for the subsistence, clothing, and often pay of the troops, but by forced requisitions on the countries in which they were cantoned. This system did admirably well, and was in the highest degree popular with the French, so long as the requisitions fell on foreign countries; but the case was very different now when they were driven back into their own territory, and these oppressive burdens had to be borne by themselves. Their eyes were then at once opened with appalling effect to the injustice which they so long practised upon others. When the whole arrondissements round Bayonne, accordingly, were laid under contribution for the support of Soult's army, and these demands were necessarily repeated as the wants of the troops called for fresh supplies, their indignation knew no bounds; and such was the general exasperation, that already they were contrasting these enormous revolutionary burdens with the comparatively light weight of the old *corvées*, which had been so much complained of before the Revolution. Soult, indeed, did his utmost to prevent plundering, and even executed an officer and some soldiers who had been detected pillaging a few houses in Sarre, immediately after the action. But this was not the

for it with hard cash on the spot. The English knew well that that affected generosity would do us more mischief than their arms; and, in point of fact, they thus obtained resources which we had been incapable of discovering. The peasants who could not reason were rapidly seduced by that politic conduct, and received as friends the army of the stranger whose footsteps sullied the soil of their country, and whose arms were stained with the blood of their brethren."—PELLOT, *Mémoires de la Guerre des Pyrénées*, p. 80.

grievance that was complained of; it was the forced requisitions, in other words, the organised rapine of government, that was the real evil which was so sorely felt. And thus, while the English army spread wealth and prosperity around its cantonments, the presence of the French was known only by the oppressive weight of the military exactions by which they were maintained. And such soon became the magnitude of these burdens, and the exasperation which they excited among the peasantry of the country, that Soult's principal commissary, Pellet, has not hesitated to ascribe chiefly to that cause the general indisposition manifested by the rural population of France, during the invasion of 1814, to support the cause of Napoleon.*

26. When Wellington found himself once established in the territory of France, he immediately began strengthening his position with fieldworks, facing towards the north, in order to be the better able to resist any attempts Soult might make to expel him from the French soil. He waited only the surrender of Pampeluna to resume offensive operations; but such had been the activity which the governor had displayed in replenishing his magazines during the short interruption of the blockade by the battle of Soraoren, that it was not till two additional months had expired that his resources were exhausted. The garrison had confidently expected to be delivered on the 25th of July, and gazed with silent rapture on the mountains of Zubiri and Esteribar, which reflected at night

* "The system of forced requisitions conceals, under the appearance of a just division of the burdens of war, an inexhaustible source of abuses. It weighs exclusively on the rural proprietors, while the capitalist, who has no productions, escapes it altogether. This system, born of the Revolution, applicable, perhaps, under a popular government, exasperates the mind under the rule of a single monarch. I do not hesitate to say that it is one of the causes which has chiefly contributed to render the departments subjected to requisitions so impatient of the government of Napoleon; the people were incessantly pronouncing with loud groans the words requisition and *corvée*."—PELLOT, *Commissaire-Général de la Guerre dans les Pyrénées en 1813*, p. 89.

the glow of the French bivouacs; but these hopes gradually died away as the fire receded on the day following, and their aching eyes beheld no friendly columns surmounting the nearest ridges of the Pyrenees. On the 30th the blockading forces resumed their old position, and the blockade became more strict than ever. Early in August, the Galicians, about nine thousand strong, replaced O'Donnell's Andalusians in the surrounding lines; while Mina, with ten thousand more, lay in the defiles of the Pyrenees to intercept the garrison, in case they should escape the vigilance of the troops around the town. With such strictness, however, was the blockade conducted, that, during the three months it lasted, the garrison never once received even a letter from their comrades.

27. In the middle of October, the governor, who had conducted the defence with the most persevering constancy, put his troops on scanty rations of horse-flesh; and on the 26th, his resources being wholly exhausted, and the garrison subsisting only on the most revolting vermin and unwholesome plants which grew on the ramparts,* negotiations were entered into for a surrender. Cassan, the governor, at first proposed to capitulate, on condition of being allowed to retire into France with six pieces of cannon; but this was positively refused, as Wellington's instructions were peremptory that the garrison must surrender at discretion. Upon this refusal hostilities were resumed, and the governor undermined some of the bastions, threatening to blow them up, and cut his way sword in hand to France, as Brennier had done at Almeida three years before. But three days more of hunger so tamed the spirit and reduced the strength of the garrison, that they were unequal to such an effort: Wellington's orders were positive, if such an attempt were made, to give no quarter to the governor or officers, and to decimate the garrison. For-

* Dogs and cats were esteemed a luxury; rats and mice had long been sought out with avidity; and several soldiers had died from eating the roots of hemlock which grew on the ramparts.—BELMAS, iv. 774.

unately for the honour of England, and the fame of her chief, it was not necessary to have recourse to such extremities, which, in the case of the soldiers and inferior officers at least, would have been of very doubtful legality and unquestionable barbarity. On the 31st the garrison surrendered at discretion, to the number of three thousand, including eight hundred sick and wounded, and were made prisoners of war.

28. Santona was now the only fortress which remained to the French in the north-west of Spain; and though Lord Aylmer, with his gallant brigade, was ordered to embark at Passages to aid in the reduction of that place, yet circumstances prevented the design being carried into effect, and it continued blockaded to the end of the war. Meanwhile Soult was at first anxious to abandon the lines in front of Bayonne, and proposed to debouch by Jaca, with fifty thousand men, into Aragon, unite with Suchet, who, he thought, might join him with thirty thousand more, and a hundred pieces of cannon, and with their combined forces again invade Spain, maintaining the war on the resources of that country, instead of the now exhausted provinces of the south of France. But this project, which afforded by far the most feasible plan for averting from the imperial dominions the horrors of invasion, was rendered abortive by the obstinacy of Napoleon, in insisting upon the retention of so many fortresses in Catalonia by Suchet, which so reduced his effective force in the field, that, after providing a body of men to watch the Anglo-Sicilian army, he could not operate in Aragon with any respectable body. Suchet accordingly at once agreed to Soult's proposals, and declared his willingness to ascend the Ebro with thirty thousand men and a hundred guns, to co-operate with him in driving the Allies over that river; but only on condition that he got the artillerymen and draught horses of Soult's army sent to Catalonia, his own being absorbed in the fortresses. This was out of the question, as it would have entirely paralysed Soult himself; and,

moreover, Suchet declared that he must, in conformity with the Emperor's instructions, return, as soon as the English were driven across the Ebro, to his principal duty, that of watching over the fortresses in Catalonia.* Thus, the project of joint operations came to nothing; and meanwhile Wellington's passage of the Bidassoa and invasion of France rendered all idea of offensive hostilities in the Peninsula out of the question, and fixed the theatre of war permanently in the south of France. A striking proof of the wisdom of the British government in urging, against Wellington's opinion, that bold undertaking.

29. Soult made good use of the month's respite afforded him by the prolonged resistance of the garrison of Pampeluna, to strengthen to a most extraordinary degree his position on the Nivelle. It consisted of three lines of defence, one behind another, which equalled those of Torres Vedras in strength and solidity. They ran along

a line of hills forming the northern boundary, for the most part, of the valley of the Nivelle, and stretched from the sea and St Jean de Luz on the right, to Mount Daren on the left: from thence to St Jean Pied-de-Port, the line was protected by a ridge of rocks, so rugged that neither army could attempt to cross them. Numerous fieldworks, constructed on every eminence, especially on the right, where the great road to St Jean de Luz and Bayonne crossed the ridge, protected the line in every part where it appeared not to be adequately secured by the obstacles of nature. A second series of works in rear of the former ran from St Jean de Luz on the right to Cambo on the left, and embraced the camps of Espelette, Suraide, and Serres, the principal points where the French forces were assembled. A third line was established behind Santa P6, on the road to Ustaritz; but the redoubts on it were only commenced. Those on the two former were completed, and armed with heavy guns drawn from

* "Informed as you are by the letters of the Duke of Dalmatia of the part assigned in his projects to the armies of Aragon and Catalonia, you will from this moment take measures to concur with all your disposable means in the general plan of joint operations; so as to be in a condition, the moment that I transmit to you his majesty the Emperor's sanction, to take the field: taking care, however, to leave the fortresses of Catalonia and Aragon well garrisoned, and in the best possible state of defence."—DUC DE FELTRE, *Ministre de la Guerre*, au DUC D'ALBUFERA, Sept. 13, 1813; SUCHET, ii. 454, *Pièces Just.*

"In examining the dispositions which your excellency has directed to meet the case of the army being ordered to commence active operations, his majesty sees, as well as your excellency, grave objections to the plan as at present combined. It leaves the frontier altogether ungarrisoned; and whatever movement you may execute with a corps in the field, the first and indispensable condition to its commencement is, to leave a strong garrison in Barcelona, Figueras, and Puycerda."—DUC DE FELTRE au DUC D'ALBUFERA, 15th November 1813; SUCHET, ii. 457.

"On the 7th October Lord Wellington crossed the Bidassoa, and transported the war into the French territory. By that stroke everything was changed, and offensive operations became no longer possible to the French armies. Marshal Suchet, however, conceived he would still have time to succour the distant garrisons in the east

of Spain: and he flattered himself he should be in a condition at their head to make an effort and march upon the Ebro. The minister at war entered into his views; and the Emperor himself, when he returned to Paris, breaking the silence which he had previously preserved on the projects submitted to him, seemed to approve of their execution. *Unhappily he directed that, when the army marched, a portion of it should be left in garrison at Barcelona, Figueras, and Puycerda.* The Duke d'Albufera besought in vain for the combinations promised in that event to enable him to march. He received proofs of confidence, but no increase of force. He grieved at seeing the precious time pass away, while nothing was done: he desired not less ardently than the government to deliver the garrisons, but he had not the means of realising his wishes."—SUCHET, *Mémoires*, ii. 348, 349.

Colonel Napier (vi. 282, 284) represents the failure of this well-conceived project of joint operations on the part of Soult and Suchet, as the result of the latter throwing unnecessary and unfounded difficulties in the way of its execution. But it is plain, from the correspondence above quoted, that it in reality arose from the invincible repugnance which the Emperor felt to give up any of the great fortresses his arms had conquered, which necessarily deprived Suchet of the means of carrying it into execution, and was part of the same system which caused him to lose such noble armies in the garrisons on the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula.

the arsenal of Bayonne. Soult having been reinforced by sixteen thousand conscripts, had eighty thousand effective combatants under his orders, of whom seventy thousand were in the field, and could be relied on for active operations. The right, near St Jean de Luz, under Reille, consisted of three divisions of infantry: Clausel in the centre guarded the redoubts behind Sarre with three divisions; the left, under d'Erlon, of two divisions, was behind Ainhoué, on the right bank of the Nivelle. Foy, with his division, was on the extreme left, between St Jean Pied-de-Port and Bidarray, to threaten the allied right, and act as circumstances might require.

30. The heavy rains usual in the end of autumn being over, and fine weather having returned, Wellington, on the 9th November, prepared for a general attack. After carefully surveying the enemy's position, he judged that it was weakest in the centre, in the opening between the Rhune mountains and the bridge of Amotz, over the Nivelle; and it was there accordingly that he resolved to make his principal effort. His plan of operations was thus arranged: Hill, with the right wing, consisting of the second and sixth divisions, under Stewart and Clinton, Murillo's Spaniards, and two Portuguese brigades, was to assail the enemy's left, behind Ainhoué. The right centre, under Beresford, consisting of the third, fourth, and seventh divisions, under the command of Generals Colville, Cole, and Le Cor, were to direct their attack against the redoubts in front of Sarre and the heights behind it, supported on the left centre by Giron's Spaniards, who were to attack the slopes situated to the westward of Sarre. General Alten, with the light division and Longa's Spaniards, was in the first instance to attack the heights of La Petite Rhune, which the enemy still held as an advanced redoubt in front of the middle of his line, and, having carried them, to co-operate in the general attack on the centre; while Sir John Hope, who had succeeded Graham in the command of the left wing, consisting chiefly of

Freyre's Spaniards, was to engage the enemy's attention by a feigned attack on their right, near the sea, on the hills in front of St Jean de Luz. Thus Hill and Beresford's corps, forming a mass of forty thousand admirable infantry, of whom above thirty thousand were British and Portuguese, were to be thrown on the weakest part of the enemy's line in the centre, near the bridge of Amotz, between Clausel's and d'Erlon's corps. It will be seen from these directions how many of England's best generals, Picton, Dalhousie, Leith, Oswald, and others, were absent from ill health, or other unavoidable causes; but, on the other hand, the posts assigned to the Spaniards in the fight, told how sensibly their discipline and efficacy had improved under Wellington's directions in the course of the campaign.

31. The action began at daylight by an assault on the enemy's fortified outworks on the Lesser Rhune, which was so far in advance of their main line that it required to be carried before the general attack could commence. This fort, perched on a craggy summit, surrounded on three sides by precipices two hundred feet high, was accessible only on the east by a long narrow ridge, which in that direction descended towards Sarre, in the valley of the Nivelle. The troops destined for this operation, consisting of the light division under Alten on the left, and Giron's Andalusians on the right, had been formed, concealed from the enemy, as near as possible to their respective points of attack on the evening of the 9th: and at the signal, on the following morning, of three guns from the lofty summit of Atchubia, they sprang up; the level rays of the sun glanced on ten thousand bayonets, and immediately the rugged sides of the Petite Rhune rang with the thunder of cannon, and were enveloped in smoke. The French fired fast from the summit of their inaccessible cliffs; but the 43d, which headed the attack of the light division, pressed boldly upward, and the first redoubt was soon carried. From thence to the second was an ascent almost precipitous, to be sur-

mounted only by narrow paths, which, amidst the steep crags, wound up to the summit. There a desperate conflict, bayonet against bayonet, man against man, ensued; but the enthusiastic valour of the 43d overcame every opposition, and the fort was won. Upon this, the French retreated to their last stronghold, at the summit of the Petite Rhune, called the Donjon; and here the impetuous assault of the 43d was stayed by a natural ditch or cleft in the rocks, fifteen feet deep. Soon, however, the Portuguese *Caçadores* came to their aid; the 52d threatened them on the other side, and the outer works were abandoned. Upon this, the 43d with a loud shout leaped down into the cleft: in a minute the old walls were scaled, and the British colours planted on the highest summit of the castle. At the same time Kempt, though sorely wounded, kept the field, and expelled the enemy from the elevated plateau from which La Petite Rhune arose; and the French, driven out of all their advanced positions, fell back in great confusion to their main line of defence behind Ascain, leaving a battalion which was made prisoners at the summit of the mountain.

32. While the rocky summits of the Lesser Rhune were thus wrested from the enemy, the fourth and seventh divisions in the right centre, under Beresford, moved against the redoubts of St Barbara and Granada; and eighteen guns placed in battery against them soon sent such a stream of shot upward into the works, that the garrison, upon seeing the troops advancing with the scaling-ladders, leaped down from their intrenchments and fled. Far on the right, Hill, after a long and difficult night-march, had got, a little before seven, to the front of the enemy's extreme left; and after driving them from the rugged positions immediately opposite, near Urdax, inclined upwards, and, with the aid of the sixth division, soon approached the broken ground where d'Erlon's redoubts were placed, near the bridge of Amotz. To the spectator on the Petite Rhune, which overlooked the whole of this complicated battle-field, it presented a scene

of unequalled grandeur. Far to the left, Hope's Spaniards were coming into action, and a hundred guns below, answered by as many on the summits of the rocks, made a deafening roar in the lesser hills near the sea; while in the centre and right, fifty thousand men, rushing like an impetuous torrent down the slopes of the Atchubia mountain, with loud shouts chased the retreating French divisions into the lower grounds near the Nivelle.

33. The enemy's troops, retreating at various points at the same time through broken ground, and having their line of defence pierced through in many places, were in no condition to resist this terrible onset, and gave way with an ease that proved that long-continued disaster had weakened their spirit. Clausel's divisions in the centre,* in particular, yielded in a manner which called forth the severe animadversions of that general and Marshal Soult. Clinton, with the sixth division, broke through all the works guarded by d'Erlon's men, which covered the approaches to the bridge of Amotz, and then, wheeling to the right, attacked and carried in the most gallant style the enemy's redoubts behind Ainhoué, so as entirely to turn their defences in that quarter. The Portuguese division and Byng's brigade, with equal vigour, stormed the redoubts to which they were opposed in front of Ainhoué; and the French of d'Armagnac's division, finding that their line of defence was entirely broken through, set fire to their huts, and retreated behind Santa Pé, nearly two leagues to the rear. The rough nature of the ground caused the French left to fall into confusion while executing this retrograde movement; and Abbe's division, which stood next on the line, was entirely uncovered on its flank, and exposed to the most imminent

* "General Clausel was the first to declare with regret, that the divisions under his orders had not in all cases done their duty. If they had fought with the ardour which they had evinced in previous combats, and subsequently showed, the enemy, in spite of his superiority of number, would not have forced our lines without a loss of 16,000 or 20,000 men."—PELLOT, *Guerre des Pyrénées*, 73.

danger. That brave general, however, stood firm, and for a short time arrested the flood of conquest; but d'Erlon, seeing his danger, at length ordered him to retreat. Conroux's division, which extended from Sarre to Amotz, was at the same time broken through at several points by the third, fourth, and seventh divisions, and its gallant commander mortally wounded. The third division, by carrying the bridge of Amotz, united its attack with that of the sixth division, and thus formed the apex of a wedge thrust in between the centre and left of the French army. Though occasionally arrested by the formidable redoubts which lay in their way, the flood of war did not the less roll impetuously on, until these isolated landmarks, cut off from each other, were overwhelmed,—as a stream tide, breaking on rock-bestrewn shores, rushes round the black masses which obstruct its rise, till, surrounded by the foaming surge, they are finally submerged.

34. Clausel's right wing, however, forming the French right centre, consisting of Taupin's division and a large body of conscripts, still stood firm; and the position which they occupied, resting on three large redoubts near Ascain, was such as to afford a fair prospect of rallying the fugitives, and still retrieving the day. But at this critical juncture the light division, which had won the Petite Rhune, pressing forward with unabated vigour, led by the gallant 52d, attacked Taupin's front; and Longa's skirmishers, having turned the same ridge and approached their flank, the French, seized with a sudden panic, broke and fled. Four regiments of the whole division alone remained unbroken, and the seventh and fourth British divisions quickly assailed them in front and flank, and they were put to the rout. The signal redoubt, the strongest in the whole French line, situated on a high hill in the centre, was now left to its fate, and Colborne, at the head of the 52d, advanced to storm it; but two attacks were repulsed with heavy loss, though on the third, the garrison, seeing themselves entirely cut off and

surrounded, surrendered at discretion. During this rout of the right centre, Clausel's other divisions fled through the Nivelle in great disorder; and Soult, in extreme alarm, hurried from St Jean de Luz, with all his reserves, to endeavour to arrest the progress of defeat. Wellington, upon seeing the force which was thus ready to be thrown upon the flank of his victorious centre when hurrying on in the tumult of success, wisely halted the fourth and seventh divisions, and Giron's Spaniards, upon the northern slope of the heights they had won, looking down upon the enemy's camp at Serres. No sooner, however, had the sixth division, which was in reserve, come up, than the pursuit was renewed; the whole British centre crossed the Nivelle, drove the enemy from the heights beyond it, which formed his second line of defence, and established themselves on that advantageous ground, about two leagues in advance of the position occupied by them in the morning. Upon this the enemy's right, under Reille, which had been engaged all day with Freyre's Spaniards, fell back also, and St Jean de Luz and Ascain were evacuated; and the whole line of the Nivelle, with its superb positions, and six miles of intrenchments, fell into the hands of the Allies.

35. Next morning the victors advanced in order of battle at all points. Hope, with the left, forded the Nivelle above St Jean de Luz, and approached Bidart; Beresford, with the centre, moved direct upon Arbonne; and Hill, with the right, occupied Espelette and Suraide, and approached Cambo. During the battle on the preceding day, Foy, who with his division was in front of the Puerta de Maya, had gained some success against Mina and Murillo's Spaniards, to whom he was opposed, and captured a considerable part of their baggage. But the defeat of the main army obliged him also to fall back, and he effected his retreat, not without difficulty, by Cambo and Ustaritz, on the following day. Soult had now rallied his army in his third line of intrenchments, about eight

miles in rear of the first; but the troops were too dispirited, and the works in too unfinished a state, to think of defending them; wherefore, abandoning that line also altogether, he retired into the intrenched camp he had constructed in front of Bayonne, leaving the whole intermediate country in the hands of the Allies. In this battle Wellington lost two thousand six hundred and ninety-four men; but the loss of the French was four thousand two hundred and sixty-five, including fourteen hundred prisoners. They abandoned fifty-one pieces of cannon, and all their field magazines; and, what was of more importance, the great mountain barrier, on which they had been labouring assiduously for three months, was broken through and captured; the Allies were firmly established a considerable way within the French territory, with the harbour of St Jean de Luz to bring supplies of all sorts into the heart of their cantonments; and the flames of war had been seen lighted upon the summit of their mountain screen, far and wide through the plains and valleys of France.

36. Though Wellington, however, had thus driven the French from their position, and gained very considerable extension for the cantonments of his troops, yet his own situation was far from being free from anxiety, and even peril. He was uneasy for his right flank so long as Soult held, which he still did, the *tête-de-pont* over the Nive; and, in consequence, Hill received orders to menace it on the 16th. This was accordingly done, and at his approach the French retired across the river and blew up the bridge, which effectually secured his right flank. But the disorders of the Spanish and Portuguese soldiers in the villages, as well as the pillaging of the British, was a more serious and durable subject of anxiety. With the latter, plunder was the result merely of the passing desire of gain and intoxication; but with the former it had a deeper origin, for it was founded on a profound thirst for vengeance, arising from the innumerable evils of a similar description

which the French troops had inflicted upon every part of the Peninsula. There was hardly a soldier in the Spanish or Portuguese armies who could not tell the tale of a parent or brother murdered, a sister or daughter ravished, or a patrimony destroyed, from the violence of the French soldiers, or the more lasting scourge of their contributions. They not unnaturally imagined, that, now that they had got into France, it was their turn to indulge in the same excesses, and satiate at once their thirst for vengeance and desire for plunder, on the blood and the property of the wretched inhabitants.* Rapine, accordingly, immediately commenced. On the very day of the battle, Freyre's and Longa's soldiers began pillaging Ascain the moment that they entered it, and murdered several of the inhabitants; Mina's battalions on the right, some of which had shaken off all authority, dispersed themselves, marauding through the mountains; the Portuguese and British soldiers of the left had begun the same disorders, and two persons had been killed in one small town.

37. Natural as the feelings were which led to these excesses on the part of the Peninsular soldiers, they were utterly abhorrent to the disposition of Wellington; they were subversive of the principles on which he had throughout maintained the contest, and were only the more dangerous

* "We ran up and found a poor old French peasant lying dead at the bottom of the garden. A bullet had passed through his head, and his thin grey hairs were dyed with his own blood. A *Çaçadore* rushed out, and attempted to elude us. On entering, we saw an old woman, the wife of the peasant, lying dead in the kitchen. The desperate Portuguese did not attempt to deny having perpetrated these murders; he seemed, on the contrary, wound up to a pitch of frenzy.—'They murdered my father,' said he; 'they cut my mother's throat, and they ravished my sister before my eyes; and I vowed at the time I would put to death the first French family that fell into my hands;—you may hang me if you will, but I have kept my oath, and care not for dying.' He was hanged; indeed, no fewer than eighteen were suspended, on this and the following days, to the branches of trees. Such extreme measures were requisite to check the ardent thirst for vengeance in the Peninsular soldiers."—*Subaltern*, 146.

that they arose from such deeply-moved passions of the human heart. Immediate and decisive, accordingly, were the measures which he adopted to remedy the evil. On the 12th, though in hourly expectation of a battle, he put to death all the Spanish marauders he could take in the act; and as the Peninsular generals were tardy or reluctant in carrying his orders into execution, and even remonstrated against them, he at once sent the whole Spaniards, except Murillo's division, which had conducted itself properly, out of France; obliging Freyre's Galicians to retire into Biscay, Giron's Andalusians into the valley of Bastan, and Longa's men over the Ebro; while Mina's mutinous battalions were disarmed and sent across the Pyrenees. By these vigorous measures he deprived himself, at a period when he much required it, of the aid of twenty-five thousand now experienced troops. But the effect was decisive:—it marked the lofty character of the man who would rather arrest success, even at its flood-tide, than purchase it by iniquity. It restored his authority in the army, and at once checked its excesses; and, by dissipating the fears of the French peasantry, brought them back to their homes, where, finding the strictest discipline established, and everything paid for in ready money, an amicable intercourse was immediately established between them and the invaders.

38. But although the disorders with which he was immediately surrounded were effectually checked by these energetic steps, it was not so easy a matter for the English general to make head against the dangers which were accumulating in his rear, and which threatened to snatch the fruits of victory from his grasp at the very time when they were within his reach. The democratic government at Cadiz, actuated by the furious passions and insatiable ambition which could not fail to be engendered by vesting the supreme power in an assembly elected by the universal suffrage of an old community, was indefatigable in its efforts to throw obstacles in his way,

and excite the national passions against him.* A slight reverse would have blown the flame thus kindled into a conflagration; and it was only by the unbroken series of his successes that the Peninsular confederacy, at the moment when it had triumphed over all its external enemies, was prevented from falling the victim to unworthy jealousy and prejudiced ambition. To such a length did they carry their hostility, that though Wellington had nominally forty thousand Spaniards under his orders, he did not venture to advance them into France, because their total state of destitution rendered pillage almost unavoidable; and immediately after he had borne the British standards in triumph across the Pyrenees, he was so thwarted in all his designs by the democratic leaders at Cadiz, that he actually resigned the general command of their armies, and

* "It is quite clear to me, that if we do not beat down the democracy at Cadiz, the cause is lost; how that is to be done, God knows."—WELLINGTON TO SIR H. WELLESLEY, 16th October 1813; GURWOOD, xi. 200.

"The persons who propagate the libels against the British army in Spain, are not the people of the country, but the officers of government, who would not dare to conduct themselves in this manner, if they did not know that their conduct would be agreeable to their employers. If this spirit is not checked, we must expect that the people at large will soon behave to us in the same manner; and we shall have no friend, or none who will avow himself as such, in Spain. A crisis is approaching in our connection with Spain; and, if you do not bring the government and nation to their senses before they go too far, you will inevitably lose all the advantages which you might expect from the services you have rendered them. I recommend to you to complain seriously of the conduct of government and their servants; to remind them that Cadiz and Carthagea—and, I believe, Ceuta—were garrisoned with British troops at their own earnest request, and that, if they had not been so garrisoned, they would long ere this have fallen into the hands of the enemy, and Ceuta of the Moors. I recommend to you to demand as a security for the safety of the King's troops, against the criminal disposition of the government and their servants, that a British garrison should be admitted to San Sebastian, with the intimation that, if this demand is not complied with, the troops should be withdrawn. And, if this is not conceded, I recommend you to withdraw the troops, be the consequences what they may, and to be prepared accordingly."—WELLINGTON TO LORD BATHURST, 27th November 1813; GURWOOD, xi. 327.

recommended to the British government entirely to withdraw their army from the Peninsula if their demands were not acceded to.

39. Nor were his difficulties less formidable at Lisbon, where the ample British subsidy was so dissipated by official corruption, that not one-half of it reached its proper destination. The muleteers of the army were two years, the soldiers nine months, in arrear of their pay; the magazines were empty, the stores deficient; although the subsidy was fully adequate to have kept all these services abundantly supplied. Fortunately the Spanish authorities had still sufficient recollection of their defeats to appreciate the consequences of being left to their own resources. The resignation of Wellington was not accepted; the stern measure of sending back the marauders to Spain restored discipline to the Peninsular armies; and Wellington was again enabled, with undiminished forces, to renew the career of victory in the south of France.

40. While Wellington was thus experiencing, in the rancour and jealousies which were accumulating in his rear in the Peninsula, which he had delivered, the baseness of factious opposition, and the usual ingratitude of men to those from whom they have received inestimable services, he was preparing to follow up his successes over Marshal Soult, and confound his democratic calumniators at Cadiz by fresh obligations. His vast army, eighty thousand strong even after the Spaniards were withdrawn, and powerful in artillery and cavalry—the former numbering a hundred pieces, and the latter eight thousand six hundred sabres—was restrained in the contracted space which it occupied; and he was anxious to extend his cantonments, and gain possession of more fertile districts, by forcing the passage of the Nive, and throwing the enemy entirely back under the cannon of Bayonne. But the heavy and long-continued winter rains, which in the deep clay of Béarn rendered the roads knee-deep of mud, and wholly impassable for artillery or chariots, prevented him from undertaking any offensive

operations till the end of the first week in December. At that period, however, the weather cleared up, and the Nive having become fordable, he brought up fifty pieces of cannon, and the passage of the river was attempted; an effort which led to one of the most desperate and sanguinary actions of the war.

41. Soult's situation on the Nive, though strong, was full of difficulties. Bayonne, situated at the confluence of that river and the Adour, commanded the passage of both; and though a weak fortress of the third order, it had now, from its situation, and the intrenched camp of which it formed a part, become a point of first-rate importance. The camp, being commanded by the guns of the fortress immediately in its rear, could not be attacked in front, on which account the French general stationed only his centre there, composed of six divisions under d'Erlon. The right wing, consisting of Reille's two divisions and Villatte's reserve, was placed to the westward of the fortress on the Lower Adour, where there was a flotilla of gunboats; and the approach to it was covered by a swamp and artificial inundation. The left, under Clausel, consisting of three divisions, posted to the eastward of Bayonne, stretched from its right to the Nive, and was protected partly by the flooded grounds, and partly by a large fortified house which had been converted into an advanced work. The country in front consisted of deep clay soil, and was much enclosed and intersected by woods and hedgerows. Four divisions of d'Erlon's men occupied it beyond the Nive, in front of Ustaritz, and as far as Cambo; the remainder being in reserve, stationed on a strong range of heights, in front of Mousserolles, stretching from Villefranque on the Nive, almost to Vieux Mouguerre on the Adour. The great advantage of this position was, that the troops, in case of disaster, might securely find refuge under the cannon of Bayonne; while the general-in-chief, having an interior and protected line of communication through that fortress, could at pleasure, like

Napoleon at Dresden, throw the weight of his forces from one flank to another, when unforeseen and unguarded against, upon the enemy.

42. But although, in a military point of view, the position of Soult was thus favourable, his political situation was very different; and it required all his perseverance, and vigour of administrative powers, to make head against the difficulties which were hourly accumulating round the sinking empire. His soldiers, though depressed by defeat, were still brave and docile. It was the difficulty of procuring supplies which was the real evil; it was the system of making war maintain war, which now pressed with terrible but just severity on the falling state. Money there was none to be got from headquarters in Paris; and the usual resource of the imperial government on such emergencies, that of levying contributions, however warmly and unanimously approved of so long as these were laid on other countries, was now complained of as the most intolerable of all grievances when they fell upon its own. Nor is it surprising that this universal indignation burst forth when the imperial system of government came to be really felt in France itself; for we have the authority of official documents for the assertion, that in Navarre, for some years before the French were driven out of the country, the requisitions had often amounted to two hundred per cent of the whole income of the landowners and farmers. So oppressive were the exactions of the French authorities felt to be, that numbers migrated into the British lines, where they not only were subjected to no such burdens, but found a ready and well-paid market for all their commodities. An official letter written from Bayonne at this period said, "The English general's policy, and the good discipline he maintains, do us more harm than ten battles—every peasant wishes to be under his protection." The conscripts raised in all the southern provinces were indeed marched in great numbers into Bayonne; but the ancient spirit of the imperial armies

was gone; they deserted by hundreds at a time, although every possible care was taken to treat them with gentleness, to spare their inexperienced frames, and to set them only on duty in the interior of the fortress.

43. Having taken his resolution to force his adversary's position in front of Bayonne, Wellington made the following dispositions for the attack:—Sir John Hope and General Charles Alten, with the first, fifth, and light divisions, Vandeleur's cavalry and twelve guns, in all twenty-four thousand combatants, were to drive back the French advanced posts along the whole front of the intrenched camp from the Nive to the sea. On the right, Sir Rowland Hill with the second and Portuguese divisions, Vivian's and Victor Alten's cavalry, and Ross's horse artillery, was to put himself in motion in the night between the 8th and 9th, so as to pass the Nive by the fords of Cambo at daybreak on the latter day, and advance by the great road from St Jean Pied-de-Port towards Bayonne. At the same time Beresford, in the centre, with the third and sixth divisions, was to cross the Nive by bridges to be thrown over it during the night; while the fourth and seventh divisions were to be in reserve a little in the rear, concealed from the enemy, but ready to support any part of the line which might require it. The main attack was to be made by the centre and right: the principal object of the advance by Hope, on the left, was to acquire an accurate view of the nature of the enemy's works between Bayonne and the sea on the Lower Adour. Wellington's object in these movements was not to force the intrenched camp before Bayonne, which, from its being under the guns of that fortress, could not be effected without very heavy loss; but to place his right upon the Adour, after crossing the Nive, whereby the enemy, already distressed for provisions, would lose the means of communication with the interior by the aid of that river, and would be compelled to fall back to other and more distant quarters, from which to draw his resources.

44. The requisite preparatory movements having been made with perfect accuracy on the night of the 8th, a huge fire, lighted on a height behind Cambo at daybreak on the 9th, gave the signal of attack. The French had broken down the bridges at Ustaritz in the centre; but the island which connected them was in the possession of the British, and the passage was immediately forced under cover of a heavy fire of artillery. D'Armagnac's brigade, which lay opposite, was driven back by the sixth division. At the same time, Hill's troops, under the cover of artillery, crossed over on the right above and below Cambo, and drove the French left wing back on the great road from St Jean Pied-de-Port to Bayonne. With such vigour was this onset made, that Foy, who commanded in that quarter, was separated from his men, and driven across the fields, with a few followers, towards Hasparren. No sooner, however, did the French troops behold the bale-fire lighted behind Cambo, than they all flew to arms. Abbé's division, which was nearest, soon joined Foy's men, and their united forces took a position on a range of heights running parallel to the Adour, with Villefranque on their right. At the same time Hope, with the left wing, moved forward by the great road from St Jean de Luz towards Bayonne; drove in all the enemy's advanced posts after a vigorous resistance, and approached so near to his intrenchments under that fortress, as completely to achieve the object intrusted to him in the general plan of operations. Shortly after noon, the Portuguese of the sixth division having come up, Hill attacked d'Armagnac's troops at Villefranque and the heights adjoining, and, after some sharp fighting and one repulse, drove them out of the former, and established himself in strength on the latter, the French retiring, amidst a heavy rain, by deep and almost impassable roads, towards Bayonne.

45. The passage of the Nive was now forced, the French left driven under the cannon of Bayonne, and the English general established in a posi-

tion from whence he could at pleasure, by a slight extension of his right, intercept the navigation of the Upper Adour, the great artery by which the French army was supplied, and which it was the chief object of the attack to cut off. But though this passage had thus been surprised, and the operations successful, his situation had become one of no inconsiderable peril. The Nive, flowing in an oblique direction from south-east to north-west, cut his army in two; while Soult with his troops, concentrated in the intrenched camp, and enjoying ample means of communicating at pleasure, by the bridges of Bayonne, from the one bank to the other, might, unknown to the Allies, throw the weight of his forces on either half of their army, when deprived of the means of co-operation with the other. He immediately resolved to take advantage of this singular good fortune, and did so with an ability and decision which would have done honour to Napoleon himself. During the night he drew back the whole of his troops into the intrenched camp, yielding thus to the Allies the ground they had won on his left, and permitting them to extend themselves to the Adour, and intercept his principal communications by that river. But while thus abandoning in appearance the whole objects of the contest, he was preparing a blow which was calculated to effect, and had well-nigh produced, a total change in the fortunes of the campaign. He gave orders in the night for the whole troops to hold themselves in readiness to start at daylight; and, after providing for the defence of the intrenched camp and the fortress, early on the morning of the 10th he issued forth on the left of the Nive, with nearly his whole disposable forces, about sixty thousand strong, to assail one-half of the Allies stationed in that quarter, not mustering more than thirty thousand combatants.

46. At daylight this formidable apparition burst upon the British left, by which such an onset, after the success of the preceding day, was wholly unexpected. Hope's troops, with the ex-

ception of Wilson's Portuguese, deeming the contest over, had retired to their cantonments; the first division was at St Jean de Luz, six miles from the outposts; the light division had orders to retire from Bassussary to Arbonne, nearly four miles in the rear, but had fortunately not begun to move; and the fifth division was near Bidart: so that the troops were scattered in a way of all others the most favourable for being cut up in detail. The British brigades which were left in front occupied indeed a strong position, stretching along the ridge of Barrouilhet, across the great road to the Bidassoa, and along the ridge of Arcangues on its right; and the country in that direction, much intersected by woods and hedgerows, and capable of being traversed, like La Vendée, only by narrow and deep roads, was very susceptible of defence. But the risk was extreme that the light division, not more than six thousand in number, would be crushed before any succour could arrive for its support. The chateau and church of Arcangues, and the village of the same name, constituted strong points of defence; and three tongues of land extended from its front to the northward by which the enemy must approach; they were held by the 52d, the pickets of the 43d, and the Rifles, while the valleys between them were clothed with copsewoods, which were almost impenetrable. Intrenchments had been ordered to be constructed on a great scale, to strengthen this part of the position; but they were only traced out, and the fourth division, the nearest support, was several miles in rear of the light.

47. In these circumstances, if Soult had adhered to his original design of massing his whole army together on the plateau of Bassussary, and falling at once on the light division at Arcangues, it must inevitably have been destroyed. But late in the evening he changed his plan, and, instead of concentrating his force on one point, divided it into two corps—the one of which, under Clausel, advanced against Arcangues, while the other, led by

Reille, moved against Hope by the great road to the Bidassoa. A heavy rain fell in the night; and it was some time after daybreak ere the enemy, whose vast accumulation in front of Arcangues was wholly unsuspected, were observed to be lining the hedgerows, and silently stealing up the wooded hollows in front of that village. Kempt, who was with the pickets, no sooner observed these ominous symptoms, than he gave orders to occupy the church and village with his reserves, and there was barely time to complete these preparations when the enemy were upon them. Issuing from the woods and the hollows with loud cries, and all the restored confidence of victory, the French fell upon the pickets on all the tongues of land in front of Arcangues in overwhelming numbers, and with assured anticipation of success. To maintain their ground against such vast odds would have exposed themselves to certain destruction; and the 43d, 52d, and Rifles, with a Portuguese regiment, fell swiftly back along the narrow necks of land for above a mile, firing all the way; but no sooner had they reached the open ground at their extremity in front of Arcangues, than these incomparable troops suddenly united their seemingly routed bodies, faced about, and presented an impenetrable front to their pursuers. The French, with loud cries, and extraordinary enthusiasm at their now unwonted success, advanced to the attack, and Soult brought up a battery of twelve guns directly in front of Arcangues, which opened a heavy cannonade on the church and village; but the 43d, Rifles, and Portuguese, by an incessant and well-directed fire of small-arms, made good their post, while the 52d held the open ground on the left, towards the great road, with invincible courage.

48. While this desperate conflict was going on in the centre, in front of Arcangues, a still more sanguinary and doubtful fight had commenced on the left, at Barrouilhet. There the attack was so wholly unexpected, that the first division and Lord Aylmer's brigade were at St Jean de Luz and

Bidart, six miles in the rear, when the action commenced about nine o'clock. At that hour, Reille with two divisions attacked a Portuguese brigade in Anglet, the advanced post of the left, and soon drove them out of that village, and pursued them with heavy loss to the ridge of Barrouilhet, where they rallied on Robinson's brigade of the fifth division, and stood firm. A confused but desperate and bloody conflict immediately ensued along the whole line in that quarter, as the assailants, heated and animated by their success, pushed through the openings in the hedges, at some places penetrating these, in others vigorously repulsed. But by degrees the troops from the rear came up. Lord Aylmer's brigade of the Guards and Bradford's Portuguese arrived in breathless haste, and relieved Robinson's men, who by this time had suffered severely; and Sir John Hope, who received a severe contusion, and his whole staff, set a noble example of ability, coolness, and devoted valour. Thus time was gained; and meanwhile Wellington, who, during the night of the 9th, had been on the right bank of the Nive, alarmed by the heavy fire on his left, repaired in person at daybreak to the threatened side of the river, and made the third and sixth divisions cross, while Beresford threw over another bridge to facilitate the passage. As soon as he arrived near Arcangues, and saw how matters stood, he ordered up in addition the fourth and seventh divisions; and the sight of these imposing masses, which now appeared on the field, so disconcerted Soult, that he suspended all further attacks, and both parties rested on their arms on the field of battle.

49. Soult's blow, ably conceived and bravely executed, had now been delivered, and failed; the attack of his concentrated masses on the allied left had been met and driven back by a small part only of the British force. Still that indefatigable officer did not yet hold himself beat; instead of being disconcerted by his repulse, he immediately set about fresh combinations to recall victory to his standards. But

in the night a disheartening reverse occurred, strikingly manifesting that the fortunes of Napoleon were sinking. Two German regiments, one of Nassau and one of Frankfort, came over to the Allies, and were received with unbounded joy, drums beating and arms presented by the British battalions, who were drawn up to receive them. They were not deserters, but acted in obedience to the command of their prince, who, having joined the ranks of Germany's deliverers on the Rhine, now sent secret instructions to his troops in Soult's army to do the same. Several other German regiments were in Catalonia, and both generals immediately sent advices of what had occurred to the rival chiefs in that province—the one hoping to profit, the other to take warning from the occurrence. Before the intelligence arrived, however, Suchet had already, by the Emperor's orders, disarmed the troops of that race, two thousand four hundred strong in his army—with a heavy heart, for they were among the best soldiers he had: so that they were merely lost to the French, but not gained to the Allies. Those which came over to Wellington were immediately embarked at St Jean de Luz, and soon after joined the ranks of their countrymen on the banks of the Rhine.

50. The forenoon of the day following, the 11th, passed without any considerable action; but about two o'clock Wellington ordered the 9th regiment to make a reconnoissance on the left towards Pucho, which led to a sharp skirmish at that point, in which the 9th, being at first unsupported, was worsted, but was at length, with difficulty, brought off by the aid of some Portuguese which Hope advanced. Soult, upon this, seeing the British unprepared, ordered a general attack on the ridge of Barrouilhet; and it was executed with such vigour and celerity, that the French got into the midst of the British position before they were ready to receive them; and a confused action began with great animosity in the village of Barrouilhet and the adjoining wood. The Allies were so worn out and

reduced in number by incessant fighting all that and the preceding day, that the village and mayor's chateau were both carried; the Portuguese broke and fled, and some of the British regiments began to waver. At that moment Wellington himself rode up to the troops in front of the church—"You must keep your ground, my lads," cried he; "there is nothing behind you—charge!" Instantly a loud hurrah was raised; the fugitives on the flank rallied and re-formed line; a volley was poured in, the bayonets levelled, and the enemy were driven, still obstinately fighting, out of the village and chateau, which remained in the possession of the British; as one bull, his horns close locked in his adversary's, is fairly mastered and pushed back by the superior strength of his antagonist. General Hope soon after came up with the 85th regiment; and that noble officer, whose overflowing courage ever led him to the front, where the fire was hottest and the danger greatest, was to be seen among the troops, his lofty figure overtopping all the motley throng with which he was surrounded, animating his men by his voice and example.* By great exertions he at length restored order, and the enemy were repulsed, with a loss of about six hundred on each side; but the fifth division, being now exhausted with fatigue, and much reduced in numbers, was relieved by the first in the front of the position.

* "I have long entertained the highest opinion of Sir John Hope, in common, I believe, with the whole world; and every day's experience convinces me of his worth. We shall lose him, however, if he continues to expose himself to fire as he has done in the last three days; indeed his escape was then wonderful. His hat and coat were shot through in many places, besides the wound in his leg. He places himself among the sharpshooters, without, as they do, sheltering himself from the enemy's fire."—WELLINGTON to COL. TORRENS, 15th December 1813. GURWOOD, xi. 371. The author has a melancholy pleasure in recording these lines to the memory of a noble relative, now no more; whose private worth and patriotic spirit, in the management of his great estates, as Earl of Hopetoun, have enshrined his memory as imperishably in the hearts of his friends and tenantry, as his public services have in the annals of his country.

51. Nothing but a severe cannonade, which consumed fruitlessly four hundred men on each side, took place on the 12th; and Soult, seeing that the mass of the enemy's forces was now concentrated on the left of the Adour, resolved to renew his attack on the British right, under Hill, on the right bank of that river. With this view, in the night of the 12th, he again drew the bulk of his forces through Bayonne; and leaving only two divisions and Villatte's reserve in the intrenched camp on the left bank of the Nive, crossed over with seven divisions to the right bank, in order to crush Hill, who had now two divisions only and some brigades—in all fourteen thousand combatants, with fourteen guns, in that quarter. The advantages of the French marshal's position singularly favoured this operation; for his internal line of communication, from the one bank to the other, by the bridge of boats above Bayonne, was three quarters of a league only in length, while Wellington's on the outer circle was no less than three leagues. In this way he succeeded, before daylight on the 13th, in placing thirty-five thousand combatants in Hill's front on the right of the Nive at St PIERRE, while seven thousand more menaced his rear. In expectation of this attack, Wellington ordered the sixth division to cross at daylight again to the right of the Nive; and the fourth division, and a part of the third, were soon after moved in the same direction, by the bridge which Beresford had thrown across two days before; while a division of Galicians was brought forward to St Jean de Luz, and one of Andalusians from the Bastan to the rear of the British army at Itsatou, and fed from the British magazines. But before any of these succours approached, Hill had, by the native valour of his men, defeated the whole efforts of his antagonists, three times more numerous than themselves.†

52. His force was stationed on both sides of the high-road from Bayonne to St Jean Pied-de-Port, and occupied

† See Appendix G, Chap. LXXXIII.

a line about two miles in length. The centre, consisting of Ashworth's Portuguese and Barnes's British brigade, was strongly posted on a rugged conical height, one side of which was broken with rocks and brushwood, while the other was closed in by high and thick hedges, with twelve guns pointing directly down the great road by which the enemy were to advance. The left, under Pringle, occupied a wooded and broken ridge, in the middle of which was the old chateau of Villefranque; the right, under Byng, was posted on the ridge of Vieux Mouguerre, nearly parallel to the Adour. The French occupied with their pickets a range of counter-heights, nearly parallel, at the distance of about a mile. Between the two armies was a wide valley or basin, open, and commanded in every part by the allied guns; while the roads were too deep, and the soil too wet, for the action of cavalry. The position was intersected in its centre by the great road to St Jean Pied-de-Port, as that at Waterloo was by the chaussée leading through La Belle Alliance to Charleroi. The heavy rains during the night so swelled the Nive, that Beresford's bridge of boats was swept away; and though it was soon restored next morning, yet during the early and most critical period of the action, Hill's corps was entirely separated from the remainder of the army.

53. A thick mist, on the morning of the 13th, enabled Soult to form his columns of attack unperceived by his adversary, and they were extremely formidable. In front, on the great road, came d'Erlon, leading on d'Armagnac's, Abbé's, and Daricau's infantry, with a large body of cavalry, and twenty-two guns; next came Foy's and Maransin's men, and, behind, the other two divisions in reserve. These huge and dark masses, closely grouped together on the high-road and fields immediately adjoining, at one time entirely shrouded in mist, at another dimly descried through openings of the vapour, seemed of portentous magnitude. With dauntless hearts, however, the little army of the British beheld the imposing array, albeit well

aware that the bridge of the Nive had been swept away, and that no succour would be obtained till the day was far spent. At half-past eight the sun broke forth. Soult immediately pushed forward his light troops, and drove in the allied pickets in the centre, which fell back towards St Pierre. Abbé attacked them with great vigour; d'Armagnac, standing off to the left, directed his troops against Vieux Mouguerre and Byng's men; Daricau, marching by his right, moved against Pringle. The sparkling line of fire soon crept up the slopes on either side of the basin, and the more distant hills re-echoed with the roar of forty guns, which were worked with extraordinary vigour.

54. Abbé's onset in the centre was pushed with such energy, that Ashworth's Portuguese were soon driven in; and the 71st, which was sent with two guns to their aid, was likewise forced to give ground; but the 50th having advanced to its support, the French in their turn were repulsed. The enemy upon this brought up a strong battery of cannon, which played on the British centre with such effect that it was seriously weakened; and Abbé, seeing the impression, pushed forward a deep and massy column, which advanced with great vigour, in spite of a crashing cannonade that tore its front and flanks, drove back the Portuguese and 50th, and won the crest of the hill in the centre. Barnes upon this brought up the 92d Highlanders, who were in reserve behind St Pierre; and that noble corps charged down the highway, clearing away the skirmishers on either side. The main body, driving home, met the shock of two French regiments which were advancing up the causeway, but which soon wavered, broke, and fled, closely followed by the mountain plumes. Soult immediately advanced his guns on either side, the shot from which plunged through the flanks of the pursuing mass, while fresh regiments were brought up to arrest its advance. Despite all their valour, the Highlanders were unable to resist this accumulation of enemies. The French corps in front advanced steadily forward with admirable resolution,

and the 92d were borne back, fighting desperately, but in disorder, to their old ground behind St Pierre. The Portuguese guns upon this drew back to avoid being taken; the French skirmishers everywhere crowded forward to the front. Barnes fell, badly wounded; the Portuguese gunners, who had resumed their post in the rear, dropped so fast beside their pieces that their fire almost ceased. The 71st were withdrawn from the field, by orders from their colonel, gnashing their teeth with indignation at being taken out of the battle; the 3d, on the right, had yielded to the impetuous attack of d'Armagnac; nothing but the thick hedge in their front prevented Ashworth's Portuguese from being driven from their ground; and already the once dreaded, but long unheard, cries of victory resounded through the French lines.

55. Then was seen in its highest lustre what can be effected in war by individual firmness and resolution, and how vital are the duties which, at the decisive moment, devolve on the general-in-chief. No sooner did Hill, who had stationed himself on a mount in the rear, from whence he could survey the whole field of battle, behold the critical position of the centre and right, and especially the retreat of the 71st and 3d regiments, than he descended from his eminence, and in person led on one brigade of Le Cor's Portuguese infantry to support Barnes's men in the centre, while the other was despatched to aid the right at Vieux Mouguerre against d'Armagnac. Meanwhile the right wing of the 50th, and Ashworth's Caçadores, spread themselves as skirmishers behind the impenetrable hedge, and still with the most heroic courage made good their post. The 92d in consequence had time to re-form behind St Pierre; and their gallant colonel, Cameron, led them again down the road with colours flying and music playing. At this sight the skirmishers on the flanks again rushed forward; the French tirailleurs were in their turn driven back, and the 92d charged at a rapid pace down the high-

way, until they met the solid column of French infantry, in all the pride of victory, marching up. For a moment the dense mass stood firm; a shock with crossed bayonets seemed inevitable, when suddenly the enemy wheeled about and retired across the valley to their original position, scarcely pursued by the victors, who were so thoroughly exhausted with their desperate encounter as to be ready to drop down with fatigue. At the same time, the brave 71st, indignant at being withdrawn from the fight, returned to aid the tartan uniforms with such alacrity, and were so gallantly supported by Le Cor's Portuguese, headed by Hill and Stewart, that the enemy on the right centre also were overthrown, though not without heavy loss, including that of Le Cor himself, who fell severely wounded.

56. While this terrible conflict was going forward in the centre, d'Armagnac, on the British right, with the aid of six pieces of horse-artillery, had all but carried the ridge of Vieux Mouguerre, where Byng bravely struggled against vastly superior forces. But just as that division had established itself on the summit, and appeared in threatening masses on the right of the British centre, the brigade of Portuguese, so opportunely detached by Hill, arrived in double-quick time to their support. These admirable troops, ascending the reverse slope of the ridge under a raking fire from the French guns, now established on the summit, succeeded in rallying the 3d regiment; and the two united charged again up the hill with the utmost gallantry, and with loud shouts won the top. At the same time, Soult was obliged to withdraw d'Armagnac's reserve to support Abbé in the centre; and Byng, now more feebly opposed, succeeded in re-establishing himself in a solid manner on the Partouhiria range. Meanwhile Daricau, on the British left, maintained a brave and balanced contest on the hills of Villefranque with Pringle's brigade, who stoutly stood their ground; but the repulse of Abbé, in the centre, rendered it impossible for the gallant

Frenchman to maintain the advanced position he had attained, and his own losses having been very severe, he was soon after obliged to fall back to his original position on the other side of the basin.

57. Thus the repulse of the enemy was complete at all points before the other divisions came up from the left bank of the Nive. But at half-past twelve, the sixth division, which had marched without intermission since daylight, and crossed by the re-established bridge of boats behind Villefranque, appeared, led on by Wellington in person, in imposing strength, on the mount in the rear from which Hill had descended; and it was soon followed by the third and fourth divisions, and some brigades of the seventh, who were seen hurrying forward in great haste from the bridge. At this joyful sight, the wearied British, forgetting their fatigues, resumed the offensive at all points. Buchan's and Byng's brigades, with loud cheers, hurled d'Armagnac's division down the Partouhiria slope; and the centre, rushing impetuously forward, enveloped and carried all the advanced positions still held by the enemy in front of St Pierre, taking two guns, which had galled them excessively from the beginning of the fight. In vain Soult hurried to the front, and, exposing his life like the meanest of his followers, besought his men by the remembrance of their past glories, and the sight of the present dangers of their country, to return to the charge. Nothing could withstand the onward movement of the British; and the French, baffled at all points, recoiled to the ground they had held before the action commenced. The battle now died away, first to a declining interchange of musketry, and then to a distant cannonade; and before night, Soult, despairing of success in any further attacks, withdrew his troops into the intrenched camp, and himself crossed with Foy's division to the right bank of the Adour, to guard against any attempts on the part of the enemy to cross that important river.

58. This desperate battle, one of the

most bloody and hard-fought which had occurred in the whole course of the Peninsular War, cost the British two thousand five hundred, and the French three thousand men. The total loss of the Allies, from the time when the passage of the Nive commenced, was six hundred and fifty killed, three thousand nine hundred and seven wounded, and five hundred and four prisoners—in all, five thousand and nineteen; and this included five generals, Hope, Robinson, Barnes, Le Cor, and Ashworth, wounded: a clear proof of the obstinate nature of the conflict, and of the stern necessity which had compelled the chiefs to expose themselves as much as the humblest soldiers. The French lost six thousand men, killed or wounded, on the field, besides two guns, the hard-earned trophies of the fight at St Pierre: including the German troops who came over on the night of the 10th, they were weakened by eight thousand five hundred men. But, what was of still more importance, they had lost the object for which they fought. The Allies had crossed the Nive, and were established in strength on the left bank of the Upper Adour; the navigation of that river was intercepted; and Soult, with all the advantage of an intrenched camp and fortress in his rear, with an interior and central line of communication for his troops, had not only been unable to obtain any durable advantage over the portions of the allied army which he had successively assailed with his whole force, but he had been deprived of his principal line of communication, and disabled, as the event soon proved, from continuing in his defensive position under the cannon of Bayonne.

59. The good effects of the ground which Wellington had won with so much toil and bloodshed, soon appeared in the extended cantonments for his troops, and the enlarged comforts of his men. While the French army, cooped up in its intrenched camp, was deprived of all communication on either side by the Adour, and driven for their forage and support upon the vast and desolate *landes* of Bordeaux,

traversed only by land carriages, and yielding almost nothing for the support of an army; the British troops, comfortably established in Urrugne, St Jean de Luz, and the other towns on the coast, drew ample supplies from the sea on the one side, and the rich fields of Béarn, the birthplace of Henry IV. and the garden of France on the other. St Jean de Luz was declared a free port; and by a special proclamation, protection was afforded to all vessels, even French, which had been or might be found in the Nivelle or the Adour, or in any harbours on the coast of France. By these wise and disinterested measures, joined to the admirable discipline established among his troops, and which he rigorously maintained, and their constant payment for everything in ready money,* Wellington indeed deprived himself of much prize-money, which would otherwise have fallen to his lot;† but he secured ample supplies of all sorts for his soldiers.

60. The harbour of St Jean de Luz was speedily crowded with the pendants of all nations, wafting in profusion everything requisite for the maintenance of his army; while the peasants of Béarn brought their produce more regularly to the British market

* "I do not believe that the union of the two nations depends on pillage; but if it does, I declare for one, that I desire neither the command nor the continuation of such a boud, founded on plunder. I have lost twenty thousand men in this campaign; and I have not done so in order that either General Murillo, or any other general, should come here to pillage the French peasants; and as long as I command, I will not permit it. If you are resolved to pillage, look out for another commander than me; for as long as I am at your head, I declare aloud I will not permit it. You have large armies in Spain; if you desire to plunder, take away the command from me. Enter France, and I will withdraw into Spain; you know well you would be driven out in fifteen days, having neither magazines, money, nor anything requisite to carry on a campaign. France, rich as it is, would never maintain your troops, if it is given up to plunder; even those who go on the principle of levying contributions to make war maintain war, are well aware that the first thing to do is to stop private disorders. I am the best friend of the soldiers and their real interests, when I prevent them from destroying both by pillage. I could also say something in justification of

than they had ever done to that of Bayonne. This admirable conduct indeed caused a severe drain upon the British finances, especially as all the payments required to be made in specie; it threw the army in consequence seven months into arrears, and accumulated debt to an immense amount in every part of the Peninsula. But Wellington and the government had the firmness to adhere to it with scrupulous fidelity under every difficulty, and their constancy was not without its reward. It entirely stopped the growth of a national war in the south of France, which the pillage of the Spaniards at one period was beginning to excite; it sent the conscripts home by thousands from the tricolor standards; and by the striking contrast which it afforded to the ruinous requisitions of Napoleon, contributed to rouse that general indignation at his government, which so soon after hurled him from the throne.

61. The battles in front of Bayonne afford one of the most remarkable examples which the whole annals of war have preserved, of the importance of an interior line of communication, and the prodigious effect which the skilful use of that advantage can produce

my conduct on political considerations; but I have said enough, and I repeat it. I am altogether indifferent whether I command a large or a small army; but, be it large or small, it must obey me, and there must be no pillage."—WELLINGTON to GENERAL MURILLO, 24th Dec. 1813; GURWOOD, xi. 396.

† "The proclamation which I issued, declaring that private property should be respected on entering France, has been applied by their owners to the vessels taken in the Nivelle and the Adour; and though I had not such an application in my contemplation when I issued it, yet, as far as I am concerned, who in personal interest may be considered a principal party, I am desirous for the general good that it should be so applied, and that the owners of these vessels should retain their property. If the law-officers of the crown construe the proclamation otherwise, as applying only to property ashore, I request the authority of his Royal Highness the Prince-Regent to issue another proclamation, to protect the vessels found in the rivers and ports of France belonging to persons remaining in their houses, as described in my proclamation of November last."—WELLINGTON to EARL BATHURST, 8th January; GURWOOD, xi. 423, 424.

in the hands of an able general. Like Napoleon around Mantua, in 1796, in Dresden in 1813, or in the plains of Champagne in 1814, Soult contrived by means of this circumstance, with an army inferior upon the whole to that of his adversary, to be always superior at the point of attack; and such was the weight of the columns which he thus hurled in succession against different parts of the British force, that he more than once all but gained a decisive advantage, and nearly reft from Wellington the fruits of his whole conquests beyond the Spanish frontiers. This close approximation to success, also, was attained with troops disheartened by long-continued defeat, against an enemy flushed with an unparalleled series of victories, and against a commander who never was outdone in the sagacity with which he divined the intentions of his opponent, and the rapidity with which he moved his forces to counteract them. On the other hand, the ultimate defeat of all these efforts, though planned with the utmost ability, and executed with surpassing gallantry, by a comparatively small body of the allied troops, proves, what so many other events in the war conspire to demonstrate, that a certain degree of firmness in the generals, and courage in the soldiers, who are thus assailed by the powers of strategy, will often counterbalance all their advantages; and that it is to the want of these qualities among his opponents, as much as his own genius, that the triumphs of Napoleon in Italy and Champagne are to be ascribed.

62. Soult's conduct in the campaign, from the time that he assumed the command in the middle of July, was a model, so far as the general direction of its movements is concerned, of vigour and ability; and probably no other commander in the French army, excepting the Emperor, could, with the same means, have made a resistance equally obstinate and protracted. When it is recollected that when he took the command of the army in the middle of July at Bayonne, he found it routed and disorganised, and in such a state of depression as to be almost un-

equal to any active operations; and that in the end of December he was still under the walls of the same fortress, after having, in the intervening period, fought seven pitched battles, and sustained a loss of thirty thousand men, it must be admitted that a more glorious example of tenacious resolution and patriotic resistance is not to be met with in the long and glorious annals of military exploits. His immediate resumption of the offensive, and advance towards Pampeluna, is one of the happiest instances that ever occurred of a defensive, maintained by a vigorous offensive warfare; and though defeated both then and in the subsequent engagements on the frontier, by the admirable promptitude and moral courage of his antagonist, yet, in prolonging the contest for such a considerable period, he evinced resources of no ordinary kind. In the execution of his admirable projects, however, in the actual shock of battle, he did not by any means display the same capacity; and if he had evinced as much vigour at Soraoren on the 26th July, at Bassussary on the 10th, or St Pierre on the 13th December, as he showed ability in the previous conception of the movements which led to these battles, the result might have been different, and the British arms have been rolled back with defeat behind the Ebro.

63. Divided as the Spanish and English writers will ever be on the share which their respective countrymen had in its triumphs, there is one glory connected with the Peninsular War, which the British empire shares with no other power, and which the biographer of Wellington is entitled to claim as exclusively his own. During all the difficulties of the contest, and in the midst of the almost overwhelming embarrassments which arose from the long continuance and oppressive burdens of the war, England never adopted the odious revolutionary principle of drawing the resources for the contest from the country in which it was carried on; and from first to last firmly, to her own great immediate loss, repudiated the maxim that war should

maintain war. Whatever she did, she did with her own forces, and from her own means alone. No ravaged country had to rue the day when her standards appeared upon it; no wasted realm showed where her armies had been; no tears of the fatherless and the widow, mourning cold-blooded massacres, dimmed the lustre of her victories. If disorders occurred, as occur they did, and occur they will, it was against her system of warfare, and despite the utmost efforts of her officers and her chief. With unconquerable constancy, Wellington and the British government adhered to this noble system, in the midst of pecuniary difficulties which would have crushed any other man, and financial embarrassments which would have overwhelmed any other nation. During all this time, Napoleon's generals and armies were revelling in wealth and

affluence, and France itself was enjoying comparatively light taxation, the fruit of the unbounded and systematic extortion which they had long practised in all the countries occupied by their armies. But mark the end of these things, and the final opposite effect of the gains of oppression and the rule of justice upon the fortunes of nations. Napoleon, driven with disgrace behind the Rhine and the Pyrenees, was unable to protect even the mighty empire he ruled from the aroused and universal indignation of mankind; while Wellington, commencing from small beginnings, at length burst, with an overwhelming force, through the mountain barrier of the south, liberated the whole Peninsula from the oppressor's yoke, and planted his victorious standards, amidst the blessings of a protected and grateful people, on the plains of France.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

EUROPE IN ARMS AGAINST FRANCE. NOV. 1813—JAN. 1814.

1. THE astonishing results of the campaign of 1813 appeared more fully when the crash of arms was over, and the alternations of hope and fear no longer distracted the mind from the contemplation of the revolution which it had effected. When the campaign had terminated—when the remains of the Grand Army, mournful and defeated, had wended their way across the Rhine, and the once triumphant Peninsular hosts, reflux through the passes of the Pyrenees, had finally abandoned the fields of Spain—the magnitude of the change was such, that it seemed beyond the power of any earthly forces, how great soever, to have effected it. Little more than three months had elapsed since four

hundred thousand French, flushed with recent victory, were grouped round the fortresses of the Elbe; while two hundred thousand, proud of their expulsion of the British from the plains of Castile, were prepared to maintain on the Tormes or the Ebro the dominion of the Peninsula. Of this immense host not more than eighty thousand had regained the left bank of the Rhine, and hardly as many remained to arrest the invader on the Adour and amid the Pyrenees. The remainder had sunk under the sword of the enemy, wasted away under the horrors of the bivouac and the hospital, or were shut up, without a hope of escape, in the German fortresses. The few who had regained their native land bore

with them the seeds of contagion, and a sadness of feeling, which rendered their presence a source of weakness rather than of strength to their suffering countrymen. The vast and splendid fabric of the French empire had disappeared like a dream. Its external influence, its foreign alliances, had vanished; the liberated nations of Europe, amidst shouts of triumph and songs of gratulation, were crowding in arms to overwhelm its remains; and the mighty victor, reft of all his conquests, was left with no greater resources than the old monarchy of Louis, now nearly drained of its military defenders, to make head against so many iron bands, whom former wrongs had roused to resistance, and recent heroism led to victory.

2. The forces of the Revolution had hitherto basked only in the sunshine of prosperity. So feeble and ill-concerted had been the assault of the European powers in 1793, that even the tumultuary arrays which the fervour of the Convention had called forth, and the guillotine of the Committee of Public Salvation had retained at their standards, were sufficient to repel them; and the hydra, which might with ease have been crushed in its cradle, was permitted to grow up till it had encircled every monarchy of Europe in its folds. But the period had now arrived when this long career of prosperity was to be succeeded by a still more striking train of adverse fortune—when the forces of Europe, instead of being arrayed with France against England, were to be arrayed with England against France; when disaster, long-continued and universal, was to break in pieces the vast supremacy of former times; and when the iron was to enter into the soul, not merely of the sinking nation, but of every family and individual of which it was composed. This, then, was the real test of the strength and constancy of the Revolution. The time had come when the passions of success were no longer to animate, the blaze of victory no longer to allure; but when the stern approach of adversity could be met only by the inherent strength of

heroism, or the willing sacrifices of duty. The moment is interesting beyond any other which had occurred in the progress of the contest; for the touchstone was now to be applied to the power, resting on the passions of the world, which had so fearfully shaken those which were based on the fervour of Heaven; and France was to go through the ordeal from whence had issued the spirit which defended the ramparts of Saragossa, and the devotedness which fired the torches of Moscow.

3. Napoleon set out for Paris from Mayence early in November, and arrived at St Cloud on the 9th of that month. For the second time within the year, he had reached his capital defeated and forlorn, with his army lost, his power shaken, and his glory dimmed. But how disastrous soever the circumstances of his empire were, the energy of the Emperor was equal to the emergency. His first care was to convoke the Council of State; and to them he made a candid and true statement of the magnitude of his losses, and the necessity of vigorous measures to avert the dangers by which they were threatened. To them also he communicated the terms—which will be immediately mentioned—on which the allied sovereigns at Frankfort had declared their willingness to treat for peace. The Council, consisting of the Secretaries of State, Talleyrand and Molé, implicitly adopted the views of the Emperor—which were in themselves obviously well-founded—that, in the emergency which had arisen, it was indispensable to have recourse to a dictatorship, and that vast sacrifices must be demanded of France. The Emperor set the first example of such a sacrifice, by ordering thirty millions of francs (£1,200,000) to be taken from his vaults in the Tuileries for the public service. He speedily, also, gave earnest of what he expected of his subjects, and of the dictatorial power he was about to assume, by issuing of his own authority, and without any legislative sanction, a decree by which thirty additional centimes—that is, nearly a third—was

added to the land, window, and door tax; the personal tax on movables was doubled, and three-fifths were added to the excise duties and the salt tax. Although these additions to the taxes were plainly illegal, as wanting any legislative sanction, even according to the shadow of constitutional freedom which remained to France under the imperial regime, they were the only means which remained of replenishing the public treasury, which, from the cessation of all external requisitions, and the enormous expenses of the late campaign, was totally exhausted. The confiscation of the funds of the municipalities and the hospitals of the poor, decreed at the beginning of the year [*ante*, Chap. LXXIV. § 76], had not produced half the sum expected, as few purchasers could be found; and even what was got had been altogether drained away. Public credit was ruined; the three per cents were at forty-five; the bank shares of one thousand francs at three hundred and four; and no capitalist could be found in France who would advance the government five pounds.

4. But however indispensable these illegal stretches might be to provide funds for the immediate necessities of the state, they were by no means acceptable to the nation; and the time had now come when the unparalleled disasters of the last two years, and the continual drain which the taxes and conscription had occasioned on the wealth and population of the empire, had produced a general feeling of discontent, which neither the influence of the imperial government could stifle nor its terrors overawe. The feelings of natural affection had been subdued, and the woeful destiny of the young conscripts concealed, so long as success attended the imperial arms, and the continued advance of the armies veiled from observation the sufferings of the soldiers. But when the victories of the empire were at an end, and the armies, instead of moving on to fresh conquests, were thrown back with terrific slaughter on their own frontiers; when no marshal's baton in distant prospect could allure the

young conscript, but the gloom of the hospital, or the starvation of the bivouac, rose up in grim array to terminate his career in a few months; when relief from domestic taxation, and the means of foreign aggrandisement, were no longer to be attained by the advance of their conquering arms to hitherto untouched fields of plunder, but increase of burdens, and the prospect of themselves suffering from pillage, were imminent from the threatening hosts which were ready to pour into their territory, or their reluctant armies retiring from scenes of defeat; the minds of the people were of necessity turned into a new direction, and they became sensible of the real tendency and necessary effects of the imperial government.

5. A general feeling of horror, accordingly, especially at the conscription and the excise taxes, now became general in the community: the opinion spread widely that the war was endless, and its exhaustion insupportable; the unbending character and known ambition of the Emperor seemed to preclude all hope of a termination being put to it, save by the destruction of France itself; and wishes in secret were formed for a change of government, as the only means of escaping from such a multitude of evils. Several pieces containing lines which might be applied to existing circumstances, were prohibited, in consequence, from being represented at the public theatres; defamatory couplets* were circulated, and eagerly received in society; and one in particular, found affixed in the Place Vendôme to the pedestal of the column of Austerlitz, which then was adorned with the statue of the Emperor on its summit, had an inscription terribly characteristic of the feeling of the time. It bore, that if the blood which he had shed were collected together in that square, it would reach his lips,

* Such as, "Napoleon is a bad gardener; for he has permitted his grenadiers to be frozen, and his laurels to fade." The "Tableau Parlant" was prohibited at the theatres for fear of the application of the line, "He had formerly made conquests which nowadays he cannot do."—CAPEFIGUE.

so that he might drink it without stooping his head.*

6. It was not surprising that this feeling of horror should have pervaded the community of France; for the calamities which had now fallen upon the army, in consequence of the disastrous issue of the late campaign were extreme. On returning to Paris, Napoleon had inserted a statement in the *Moniteur*, that the reorganisation of the army was rapidly advancing; that the marshals had received reinforcements to enable them to maintain impregnable the barrier of the Rhine; that the artillery had repaired its losses; the National Guards were crowding into the fortresses; and that all the efforts of the Allies would be shattered against that bulwark of art and nature. But in the midst of all this seeming confidence, the real state of the army on the frontier was very different; and disaster, widespread and unparalleled, had overtaken the shattered remains of the host which had wended its way back from the Elbe. Though the country through which that retreat had been conducted was rich and cultivated, the season temperate, and the marches not in general of unusual length, yet the deplorable effects of Napoleon's system of carrying on war without magazines, or provision of any kind for a retreat, had reduced the troops to the most woeful state of destitution. The first corps which passed along the road consumed everything on its line, and within reach of the stragglers on either side, to the distance of several miles; and those which came after, as on the Moscow retreat, could find nothing whatever whereon to subsist. Magazines there were none, except at Erfurth, between the Elbe and the Rhine, a distance of above two hundred miles; and the supplies in that city only maintained the troops dur-

ing the two days that they rested within its walls. During the fifteen days that the retreat lasted, the men were left to search for subsistence as they best could, along an already wasted and exhausted line. The consequence was, that they straggled from necessity over the whole country, and arrived on the Rhine half-starved, in the deepest dejection, bearing with them the seeds of a frightful epidemic, which soon proved more fatal even than the sword of the enemy.

7. Nothing could exceed the astonishment of the inhabitants of the left bank of the Rhine, who had hitherto known war only by its excitement and its glories, when they beheld this woeful crowd, pouring back by the bridge of Mayence into the French territory, and spreading like a flood over the whole country. But their number was so considerable, that even the zeal and charity of the inhabitants, which were exerted to the utmost, were unable to provide any effectual remedy for their distresses. In the fortified towns, where the great mass of the fugitives, armed and unarmed, found a refuge, their situation, though at first superior, was ere long still more deplorable. The dreadful typhus fever which they brought with them from the scenes of their suffering in the German plains, soon spread to such a degree among the exhausted crowds who sought shelter within the walls, that in a few days not only the greater part of the military, but a large proportion of the citizens, were prostrate on the bed of sickness. The churches, the hospitals, the halls of justice, the private houses, were soon filled with a ghastly and dying multitude, among whom the worst species of fever spread its ravages, and dysentery wore down attenuated forms to the lowest stage of weakness. Such was the mortality, that for several weeks at Mayence it reached five hundred a-day. The exhalations arising from so great a multitude of dead bodies, which all the efforts of the inhabitants could not succeed in burying, were such that they ere long poi-

* "Tyran ! juché sur cette chaise,
Si le sang quo tu fis verser
Pouvait tenir en cette place,
Tu le boirais sans te baisser."

Another inscription, in huge letters, was found in the morning affixed to the Tuileries—
—"Stock for sale—not dear—*Sire-manufactory*."—*CAPEFIGUE*, x. 4.

soned the atmosphere, and spread an insupportable and pestilential odour through the whole city. The churchyards and ordinary places of sepulture being soon overcharged, and interment in coffins out of the question, from the multitude of dead bodies which abounded on all sides, they were thrown promiscuously into vast trenches dug in the public cemeteries, which were rapidly heaped up to a height exceeding that of the walls enclosing them. When this resource failed, they were consigned to the Rhine, the stream of which wafted them down as from a vast field of carnage, to the German Ocean. Meanwhile, the shores of the Baltic were polluted by the corpses, which, borne by the waters of the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula, from the vast charnel-houses which the fortresses on their banks had become, told of the last remains and final punishment of the external government of the Revolution.*

8. The internal administration of Marie Louise, as Regent, after the departure of the Emperor for the German campaign, had been sombre and monotonous, little calculated either to distract the attention, or dispel the increasing anxieties, of the people. She went through, with docility, all the external forms which were required by her elevated situation; and, incapable of apprehending either the duties or the perils with which it was attended, submitted with the same impassable temper to the unbounded flatteries with which she was surrounded, as to the fearful demands she was compelled to make on the blood of her subjects. In August she obtained a temporary respite from the formal duties which oppressed her in the capital, by a journey to Cherbouurg, where she had the gratification of beholding the last stone put to that vast construction, partly built, partly excavated from the solid granite, which, commenced by the patriotic spirit of Louis XVI., and continued

by the unwearied perseverance of Napoleon, was destined to rival the noble harbours on the opposite coast, from whence the fleets of the proud Albion issued forth to give law to the waves. The little feet of the Empress were the last which pressed the solid granite of the basin before the new element was let in. But sterner duties soon awaited her. Immediately after her return to Paris, she was made the organ by which the Emperor demanded a conscription of thirty thousand men from the southern departments; and, a month after, another of two hundred and eighty thousand from the whole empire, which were immediately voted by the senate—in all three hundred and ten thousand. They were ordered to be taken in the following proportions; viz. one hundred and twenty thousand from the class attaining the legal age in 1814 and the preceding years, and the remainder from those reaching that age in 1815—in other words, who were *two years under* the legal age of nineteen to twenty-one. So vast had been the consumption of life in the French army, even anterior to the overthrow of Leipsic, in the disastrous campaigns on the Elbe and in the Pyrenees, and so fearful the inroads which the insatiable ambition of the Revolution had now made upon the blood and strength of the empire, that the military population of the proper age was exhausted, and additional troops could be raised only by seizing upon youths of seventeen and eighteen years old, hardly capable of bearing arms, and altogether unfit to withstand the fatigues of a campaign.

9. These ample supplies of men, however, were wholly insufficient to meet the wants of the empire, after the disasters of Leipsic had thrown them back behind the Rhine, and the invasion of Wellington had laid bare the defenceless condition of the southern frontier. In the Council of State, the day after his arrival, Napoleon unfolded the danger of his situation with manly sincerity, and enforced his demands with nervous eloquence. "Why," said he, "should we fear to

* See *Tableau des Hôpitaux pendant la Dernière Campagne de Napoléon*. Par J. B. A. HAPPEL, Ex-directeur des Hôpitaux Militaires. Paris, 1816.

speak the truth? Has not Wellington invaded the south? Do not the Russians menace the north? What shame! and the nation does not rise in a mass to chase them away. All my allies have abandoned me: the Saxons betrayed me on the field of battle; the Bavarians endeavoured to cut off my retreat. Never talk of peace till I have burned Munich. The same triumvirate which partitioned Poland has arrayed itself against France: we can have no truce till it is defeated. I demand three hundred thousand men: with what remains of my armies, I shall then have a million of soldiers. Councillors, what we require is energy: every one should march: you are the chiefs of the nation; it is for you to give an example of courage. Every one speaks of peace; that word alone strikes my ear, while everything around us should resound with the cry of war!"

10. On the day following the senate was assembled, and the fresh demand on the Emperor's part of three hundred thousand men was brought forward by the orator of government, Fontanes, whose brilliant elocution and sounding periods were well calculated to throw a deceitful veil over the devouring requisitions of the Revolution. Napoleon's own words breathed a nobler spirit—"A year ago," said he, "all Europe marched with us; at present, it all marches against us: that is because the opinion of the world is formed by France or England. We should, then, have everything to fear but for the power and energy of the nation. Posterity shall admit that, if great and critical circumstances were presented, they were not above France and me." The levy required was decreed as soon as the project was presented: it was ordered to be taken, not as in former cases, by anticipation from the young men who would arrive at the age liable to the conscription in succeeding years, but by *retrospect* from the classes who had undergone the ordeal of the conscription in former years, from 1803 downwards. Thus, within little more than two months, successive levies were demanded from the French

people, now reduced almost to their ancient limits, of more than six hundred thousand men: an awful proof of the consumption of human life occasioned in their last stages by the wars of the Revolution. The change in the classes declared liable to the conscription is very remarkable. It indicates the consciousness of government of the arrival of the period when the dreadful destruction of life by the campaigns of 1793 and 1794, had rendered it impossible to draw additional supplies from the young men born in these or the succeeding years, and when it had become indispensable to recur to those who had come into being before the Revolutionary scythe had begun to sweep away at once the strength of one generation and the hopes of the next.*

11. Preparations to resist the dreaded invasion were immediately ordered by Napoleon. Engineers were despatched to the principal fortresses on the northern frontier, with instructions to repair the walls, arm the ramparts, fortify the bridges and passes, and make every possible preparation for a vigorous defence. But when they arrived there, and became acquainted, by ocular inspection, with the deplorable state and reduced numbers of the army, as well as the total want of any preparation, either in the way of magazines, provisions, or artillery, for putting the frontier fortresses in a state of defence, they were soon convinced that it was altogether impossible to think of defending the line of the Rhine. That great frontier stream, above five hundred miles in length, extending from the foot of the Alps to the sands of Holland, strongly studded with fortresses, presented, indeed, a most formidable line of defence, if guarded by three or four hundred thousand men. But it was altogether impossible to maintain it with sixty or seventy thousand soldiers, worn out with fatigue, depressed by defeat, with a frightful contagion thinning their ranks, and no

* See chap. lxxiv. § 71 et seq., where the effect of the conscription on the male population of France—a most curious and interesting subject—is fully discussed.

magazines to replenish their military stores. It was resolved, therefore, to make no attempt to defend the frontier river, but to fall back at all points across the Vosges mountains. But the Allies were not aware of this resolution; they were ignorant of the weakness and losses of the French army, and paused before the majestic stream which had so long been the frontier of their empire, when they needed only to have crossed it to have wrested from the enemy, without firing a shot, nearly a third of France.

12. Serious, however, as were the external dangers which menaced the empire, they were neither the only ones, nor the most pressing, which awakened the anxiety of the Emperor. The fermentation in the interior was still more alarming; and it had now become painfully evident that the Revolutionary government, deprived of the stimulus of external success, was tottering to its fall. The correspondences of the prefects over all France at that period were very remarkable, and clearly bespoke the agitation and uncertainty of the public mind. The conscription in particular excited universal apprehension, extending, as it now did, not only to those who arrived at the legal age in the course of the year, but to those who had attained that age during the ten preceding years, and who had hitherto deemed themselves secure from further molestation; while the enormous increase of the excise and assessed taxes, which practically amounted to more than a half, diffused universal consternation. The alarm on this last account was the greater, that these duties were now levied by the sole authority of the Emperor. Already the price of a substitute for the army had risen to four or five hundred pounds; the last conscription at once doubled it, and in some instances as much as twelve hundred were given. Families of respectability spent their whole property, the savings of a long lifetime, to save their sons from destruction. It was universally understood, what in truth was the fact, that the purchasing of a substitute for the conscription, was brib-

ing one man to sacrifice his life for another.

13. In proportion as the dangers of military service increased, desertion from the ranks of the conscripts became more frequent, and its punishment more severe; the prefects were incessantly occupied in enforcing the laws with the utmost rigour against refractory conscripts. Long files of them were everywhere to be seen marching along the roads to their places of punishment, with haggard visages, downcast eyes, and a four-and-twenty pound shot chained to their ankles. Great numbers, especially in the mountain districts, driven to desperation by the alternative of such a punishment, or death in the field or in the hospitals, fled to the hills and formed roving bands, which subsisted by plunder, and already bade defiance to the gendarmes and local authorities. Alarmed at the accounts he received from all quarters of this growing disaffection, the Emperor adjourned the meeting of the Chamber of Deputies, which, by a decree dated from Gotha during the retreat from Leipsic, stood summoned for the 1st December, to the 19th of that month, in the hope that in the interim the negotiations which had commenced with the Allies at Frankfort might have taken a favourable turn, and that he might be able to present some prospect at least to satisfy the universal desire which was felt for peace. At the same time, to prevent the general discontent from affecting the voice of the deputies, a decree was passed by the senate, vesting, in defiance of the constitution, the nomination of President of the Chamber in the Emperor, and prorogating the seat of such of the deputies as had expired, and required to be filled up anew, so as to prevent any new elections in the present disturbed state of the public mind.

14. While France was thus reaping, in the utter prostration of public credit, the entire exhaustion of the blood of the nation, and the universal anxiety which prevailed, the natural consequence of domestic revolution and external aggression, England exhibited

at the same period a memorable example of the very opposite effects, flowing from a strictly conservative system of government, and affording a proof of the almost boundless extent of the resources which a country at once orderly and free can develop, during the most protracted and arduous struggle, if its finances and currency are regulated on proper principles. Parliament assembled in the beginning of November; and the speech from the throne dwelt with marked, but not undeserved, emphasis upon the extraordinary successes which had signalled the last memorable campaign, and concluded with the important declaration, "that no disposition to require from France sacrifices of any description, inconsistent with her honour or just pretensions as a nation, will ever be, on the part of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, or his allies, an obstacle to the conclusion of peace." The address in answer, moved by the adherents of ministers, was agreed to in both houses without a dissenting voice; so wonderfully had the glorious concluding successes of the war stilled, both in the legislature and the nation, the furious passions which tore both at its commencement. Lord Liverpool, the prime minister, declared, that in considering the conditions of a general pacification, "It would be the policy of England to give full security, not only to her friends, but to her enemies; and that the cabinet would not countenance any demand from them, which, in their situation, they would not be willing to concede."

15. Though the language of government, however, was thus pacific, yet, like prudent statesmen, who know that the olive branch is in vain tendered with one hand, if the sword is not at the same time held unsheathed in the other, they not only admitted no relaxation in their warlike efforts, but made preparations for carrying on the contest on a still more colossal scale than in the preceding campaign. A hundred and forty thousand men, including thirty-one thousand marines, were voted for the sea service; the ships of the line in commission were

ninety-nine; the total number of vessels of war, which in that year bore the royal flag, was one thousand and three, of which no less than two hundred and thirty-one were of the line, and six hundred and forty-four of all classes were in commission. The regular land forces consisted of two hundred and thirty-seven thousand men, and the regular militia of eighty-three thousand—all of which were obtained by voluntary enrolment; besides two hundred and eighty-eight thousand local militia, who were raised by conscription from the population of the British Islands.* The land forces in India were two hundred thousand, and forty thousand militia in Canada were under arms, and actively and bravely engaged with the enemy; so that England, in this, the twenty-first year of the war, carried on hostilities with, in all, ONE MILLION AND FIFTY-THREE THOUSAND MEN IN ARMS.

16. It is not the least surprising circumstance of these marvellous times that, with the exception of the local militia, which were embodied only for a few weeks in the year, and the persons composing which never permanently left their homes, the whole of this immense force was raised by voluntary enrolment. Three or four candidates were to be found applying for every vacancy in the Indian army; and the casualties of the British army in Europe, which amounted to twenty-five or thirty thousand annually, were entirely filled up by enlistment, or volunteering from the regular militia—a system which had been attended with the very best effects, and which had yielded, in the last six years, no less than a hundred thousand admirable soldiers to the troops of the line. To extend and improve upon this dis-

* Sailors and Marines, . . .	140,000
Regular Army, . . .	237,000
Regular Militia, . . .	83,000
Yeomanry Cavalry, . . .	65,000
Local Militia, . . .	283,000
Native Indian Army, . . .	200,000
Militia in Canada, . . .	40,000

1,053,000

—LORD CASTLEREAGH's Speech, November 11, *Ann. Reg.* 1813, 203; and *Parl. Deb.* xxvii. 86, 87.

position, a bill was passed early in this session of parliament, authorising twenty-seven thousand men to be raised by volunteering from the militia, in one year; a measure which, with the ordinary recruiting, which was taken at sixteen thousand, would produce at least forty thousand men to meet the wants of the approaching campaign. By such gentle means was the stupendous force brought together, which now carried on the war victoriously in every quarter of the globe, and with so small a consumption of life were the victories gained, which now shook to its centre the iron empire of France.

17. But this immense force could only be maintained by a proportional expenditure; and, great as had been the financial efforts of Great Britain during the former year, they were yet exceeded by the colossal exertions of the present. The cost of the army alone, ordinary and extraordinary, rose to the enormous amount of thirty-three millions, besides four millions and a half for the ordnance; the navy required nearly twenty-two millions; and the interest on the national debt and exchequer bills, with the sinking fund, was no less than forty-three millions. The loans to continental states were ten millions; eight millions were advanced to Ireland; and altogether the expenditure of the year reached the enormous amount of ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN MILLIONS. The necessity of carrying on the war with the utmost vigour, at once by land and sea, both in Europe and America, from the coincidence of the near termination of the Continental with the commencement of the Transatlantic contest; the vast expense of the campaign in the south of France, at the same time that the war was prosecuted by British troops in the Netherlands, and all the armies of Europe were arrayed in British pay on the banks of the Rhine, sufficiently explain the causes of this vast expenditure. Certainly no policy could have been so short-sighted, even in a financial point of view, as that which at such a crisis would have hesitated at straining every nerve to im-

prove to the utmost the advantages already gained, and bring the contest to an immediate and glorious termination.*

18. But if it is easy to assign the causes of the vast expenses of the last year of the war, it is a very different matter to explain how the nation was able to bear it; and in truth, of all the marvels of this period, the most marvellous is the way in which funds were provided by the British empire for the gigantic expenditure of the concluding years of the war. When we recollect that the finances of France, supported as they still were by the industry of forty-two millions of persons, and aided as they had so long been by the contributions levied from one half of Europe, were at this period utterly bankrupt, and that it was only by the aid of the great reserved fund, the fruit of imperial smuggling, in the vaults of the Tuileries, that the most pressing demands on the treasury could be met; we are at a loss to conceive how it was possible for the British empire, with a population not then, including Ireland, quite reaching eighteen millions, by any means to have raised the enormous funds which were annually poured into the public treasury. Yet no difficulty whatever was experienced in this particular. The permanent revenue for the year 1814 amounted to nearly forty-four, the war taxes to thirty millions sterling; thirty-six millions were raised by loan, including that provided for Ireland; and the ways and means reached altogether the enormous sum of ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVEN MILLIONS, independent of above six millions, which were annually raised from the landed property of England for the support of the poor. But this marvel, great as it is, is much enhanced when it is recollected, that such was the unshaken credit and inexhaustible capital of Great Britain, that these prodigious loans were raised, in this the twenty-first year of the war, at the low rate of £4, 12s. 1d. of annual interest; and that even on these reduced terms, such was the competition of the lenders,

* See Appendix H, Chap. LXXXIV.

and rise of the funds and scrip, at the time the bidding was going forward, that no less than a million of stock was thereby saved to the public—the lenders being inscribed for so much stock in the five and three per cents, and immense fortunes were realised to lucky contractors.*

19. The continental writers, struck with astonishment at this growing and expansive power in the British finances, which no demands, how great soever, were able to exhaust, have generally concurred in referring it to the effect of the war itself, which secured to the English merchants the commerce of all civilised nations, and rendered London the centre of the wealth, not only of the British empire, but of the whole globe. English writers, equally amazed at this extraordinary phenomenon, have sought an explanation of it in the great addition which at this period was made to British industry, by the introduction of the steam-engine, and the vast improvements introduced into the machinery for cotton manufacture; and have repeated again and again the striking observation, that James Watt stood forth the real conqueror of Napoleon.† Without disputing, however, that these causes had a material effect in counteracting the influence of the many circumstances which, during the progress of the contest, had at various periods tended so powerfully to depress the springs of British industry, it may safely be affirmed, that the influence of this concentration of foreign commerce, and growth of manufacturing

industry, has been much overrated, and that it is in other causes that the true solution of this extraordinary phenomenon is to be found.

20. The coincidence of the American Non-importation Act, passed in February 1811, with the exclusion of British commerce from almost the whole Continent by the Berlin and Milan decrees, had reduced the British exports to a most alarming degree in that year; and though the opening of the Baltic harbours by the war of 1812, and of those of Germany and the Adriatic by that of 1813, had a powerful effect in counteracting these causes of depression, yet the closing of the North American market, which took off, even at that period, manufactured goods to the amount of fourteen millions annually, had a most prejudicial effect upon every branch of industry. Neither the exports nor imports, accordingly, of 1812 or 1813, had equalled what they had previously been in 1809 and 1810; and those who are accustomed to refer the stupendous financial efforts of Great Britain at the close of the war, to the monopoly enjoyed at that period by British commerce, which has been since shared with other nations, or the vast recent growth of its cotton manufactures, will be probably surprised to learn that at that period our exports and our imports were not more than a third of what they have since become; that our tonnage little exceeded a half of what it now is; and that the population of the empire was twelve millions less than the amount

* See Appendix H, Chap. LXXXIV.

† James Watt was the inventor of the steam-engine, and as such has deservedly acquired immortal renown. But so great and rapid have been the improvements effected by British genius on the application of that wonderful engine to the purposes of manufacture since that time, that it may be doubted whether subsequent mechanical philosophers have not had as large a share as the illustrious Scottish sage in the production of the marvellous and complicated machinery which now sustains the vast fabric of British manufacturing industry. Among the authors of these improvements, the chief places must be assigned to Sir Richard Arkwright and Samuel Crompton, Esq. The former realised a princely fortune from his inventions; the

latter, to whom the cotton manufacture is perhaps still more indebted, received a gift of £5000 from parliament, as an honorary mark of distinction for his services to his country. The result of these splendid inventions has been, that in seventy years the cotton consumed in the fabrics of Great Britain has increased from 3,000,000 lb. to 500,000,000 lb.; the persons employed in them have swelled from 60,000, to 1,300,000, and the official value of British manufactured cotton goods exported from Great Britain, which in 1751 was only £45,956, had risen in 1810 to £17,898,519, and in 1833 to the amazing amount of £46,837,210.—BAINES' *History of the Cotton Manufacture*, p. 350—a most interesting and valuable work.

which it has attained at this time (1849).*

21. The true explanation of these extraordinary and unparalleled phenomena is to be sought for, not in any casual or accidental circumstances which at that period poured any extraordinary stream of wealth into the British Islands, but in the industrious character of their inhabitants, the long protection from foreign aggression which they had enjoyed, the free and yet tempered spirit of their internal constitution, the heroic spirit with which they were animated in the latter years of the contest, and the admirable system of taxation and currency which the wisdom of Mr Pitt had bequeathed to his successors. It is not any casual or passing advantage or monopoly, enjoyed for a few years by its merchants or manufacturers, which can enable a country to maintain a war for twenty years with the most powerful nations in the world, and in its concluding years to spend from a hundred and ten to a hundred and twenty millions annually, without raising the rate of interest or exhausting its national resources. Centuries of pacific exertion, the accumulations of long-protected industry, the energy of a free constitution, the security of habitual order, an industrious national character, the influence of long-established artificial wants, and unbounded natural advantages, at once for agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, as well as a monetary system capable of giving scope to all these favourable circumstances, must combine to produce such an astonishing result.

22. England had made good use of this extraordinary combination of ad-

vantages during the whole course of the contest. Her industry, constantly protected alike from foreign aggression and domestic spoliation, had flourished amidst the revolutionary devastation or military oppression of other nations; her agriculture, keeping pace with the rapid growth of her population, had even outstripped the wants of the people, and for the first time, for nearly a century, had rendered the empire, in ordinary seasons, independent of foreign supplies of food; while her commerce and manufactures, enjoying a virtual monopoly of all the lucrative intercourse which the dreadful contest that was raging had left to mankind, though inconsiderable in amount to what they have since become, were attended in general with large profits, and occasioned a vast accumulation of wealth in a comparatively small number of hands. Above all, a system of currency was established in the country, which, without being redundant, like the French assignats, was sufficient for the wants of the community, and kept the great moving power of the nation constantly in activity, how great soever the drain of the precious metals to foreign nations, from the necessities of war, had become. But though due weight is by no means to be denied to those concurring circumstances, they were not the most important causes which conspired to produce this extraordinary result: they merely brought to maturity the crop prepared by centuries of previous regulated freedom, protected industry, and natural advantages. And all these causes, powerful as they were, would have failed in producing the result, if they had not been aided at the decisive moment

* Table showing the Population, Exports, Imports, and Tonnage of the British Empire in 1811, 1812, and 1814, and in 1836, 1837, and 1838. Records of 1818 destroyed by fire.

Years.	Population of Great Britain and Ireland.	Exports. Official value.	Imports. Declared value.	Tonnage, British and Foreign.
1811, . . .	17,580,000	£28,799,120	£26,510,186	2,072,244
1812, . . .	17,830,000	38,041,578	26,163,481	Records destroyed by fire.
1814, . . .	18,000,000	58,578,234	83,755,264	1,899,535
1836, . . .	26,030,000	97,621,549	57,280,908	8,556,697
1837, . . .	26,360,000	85,781,669	54,737,301	3,383,965
1838, . . .	26,680,000	105,170,549	61,268,820	4,099,039
1846, . . .	28,860,000	151,000,000	85,000,000	6,024,000

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, i. 11; ii. 98, and 174; and *Finance Accounts for 1840*; and PORTER'S *Parl. Tables*, ix. 43, 44.

by a noble constancy in the government, and spirit in the people, which made them face difficulties, and undertake burdens which would have been deemed unbearable in any other age or country, and poured forth the long accumulations of British wealth in the cause of mankind, with a profusion which must ever render this the most glorious and animating period of British history.

23. While great Britain and France were thus severally preparing for the final struggle which was to decide the great contest between Revolutionary and Conservative principles, the allied sovereigns, assembled at Frankfort, adopted a measure which, more than any other, tended to elevate their cause in the estimation of mankind, and to detach from Napoleon the support of the French people. The Baron Saint Aignan, ambassador of France at the court of Saxe Weimar, had been made prisoner during the advance of the Allies to the Rhine, and in the first moment of his capture he had been received with marked kindness by Metternich, who assured him, in the most emphatic terms, of the anxious wish of the allied powers, and more especially of his own sovereign, for a general peace.* Five days subsequent to their arrival at Frankfort, the allied leaders sent for the Count, and after again reiterating in person, in the strongest terms, their pacific inclinations, despatched him to Paris with a private letter from the Emperor Francis to his daughter, Marie Louise; and a diplomatic note from the whole sovereigns, in which they stated the terms on which they were willing to

open negotiations. The basis of these terms was, "that France was to be restricted to its natural limits between the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees; that Spain should be restored to its ancient dynasty; and that the independence of Italy and Germany should be secured, under princes of their native families."

24. If these terms were agreed to, M. de Saint Aignan was assured that England would make great sacrifices, and would recognise every liberty of commerce and navigation to which France had any right to pretend, and that nothing hostile to the dynasty of Napoleon would be insisted on. To these propositions Maret replied on the part of the French Emperor, that "a peace concluded on the basis of the independence of all nations, as well in a continental as in a maritime point of view, had been the constant object of his Majesty's solicitude;" and he specified the city of Mannheim on the right bank of the Rhine, which he proposed should be declared neutral, and made the seat of the negotiations. But he did not say whether or not the French Emperor would accede to the basis proposed, which omission was justly complained of by Metternich in his reply, as rendering nugatory any negotiation which might be commenced. To this Maret replied, that in admitting as the basis of the whole the independence of all nations, the French Emperor had in effect admitted all for which the Allies contended; and with this explanation Metternich professed himself entirely satisfied.†

25. Hitherto everything seemed to augur well for the opening of the ne-

* "The Emperor," said Metternich to Saint Aignan "has been under a delusion for two years. He expected to make peace at Moscow, then he persuaded himself that he could do so at Dresden. He thought that we would not make war; he thought that we would be able to retain the position of the Elbe, even with us against him. Now, who can foresee the results of this campaign? The Duc de Vicence knows that we have in our possession, under the seal of secrecy, a document which would insure peace in sixty hours. The Emperor Napoleon has accepted it all but two articles. The Emperor always thought that we would not make war. He supposed that we had only 150,000 men; we

had 300,000. It has been necessary to declare war against him. In a conversation of nine hours' duration, I had warned him of it *five times*; but nothing could make him believe it. We sincerely wished for peace, we wish it still, and we will make it. The question must be examined sincerely, and without evasion. The Coalition will continue united. Indirect means can no longer succeed." *Conversation of METTERNICH with SAINT AIGNAN.*—*BIGNON*, xiii. 24, 25.

† *Rapport du Baron Saint Aignan*, 9th Nov. 1813. *Note de Saint Aignan*, 9th Nov. *Duc de Bassano au Prince de Metternich*, 16th Nov. 1813. *Réponse de Metternich*, 25th Nov. 1813. *Lettre de M. le Duc de Vi-*

gotiation; and the better to express the views with which they were animated, the allied sovereigns published a declaration, dated Frankfort, 1st December 1813, detailing the principles on which they were willing to treat with Napoleon, and the objects for which the alliance contended. The whole history of the world does not contain a more noble instance of justice and moderation in the moment of triumph than is exhibited in this instrument. "The allied powers," it declared, "desirous of obtaining a general peace on a solid foundation, promulgate in the face of the world the principles which are the basis and guide of their conduct, their wishes, and their determinations. They do not make war on France, but on that preponderance which, to the misfortune of Europe and of France, the Emperor Napoleon has long exercised beyond the limits of France. They desire that it should be powerful and happy—that commerce should revive and the arts flourish—that its territory should preserve an extent unknown under its ancient kings; because the French power, great and strong, is in Europe one of the fundamental bases of the social edifice—because a great people can only be tranquil so long as they are happy—because a brave nation is not to be regarded as overthrown because in its turn it has experienced reverses in an obstinate and bloody struggle, in which it has combated with its accustomed valour. But the allied powers wish themselves also to be happy and tranquil—they wish a state of peace which, by a wise division of power, by a just equilibrium, may hereafter preserve their people from the calamities without number which for twenty years have oppressed Europe. They will not lay down their arms before they have at-
tence au Prince de Metternich, 2d Dec. 1813. Réponse de Metternich, 10 Déc. 1813. All contained in the suppressed *Moniteur* of 20th Jan. 1814, and given in FAIN, *MS. de 1814*, 46-57; *Pièces Justificatives*.

* "The Allies have since acknowledged that, if in the instant when the Emperor knew the bases of Frankfort, he had sent a plenipotentiary authorised to sign them (as the

tained that great and beneficent result; they will not lay them down till the political state of Europe is of new secured, till the immutable principles of justice have resumed their ascendant over vain pretensions, and till the sanctity of treaties has at length secured a real peace to Europe."

26. When sentiments so elevated and generous were promulgated openly by the conquerors, it might reasonably have been expected that the negotiations would have been immediately commenced by the French government; and certainly never was defeated monarch and nation invited in such a way to concur in the general pacification of the world. It is admitted by Caulaincourt, that in making these propositions the Allies were, at that time at least, perfectly sincere, and that if Napoleon had at once closed with them, peace might have been concluded.* Instead of this, however, Napoleon by every art postponed the opening of the negotiations as much as possible; and six weeks after M. de Saint Aignan had been despatched with these pacific overtures, they had not even got the length of plenipotentiaries being named. The basis agreed to by Napoleon was accepted by the Allies on the 10th December, but the letter notifying their acceptance was not even answered by Caulaincourt on the part of France till the 6th January; and before that time arrived, the Rhine was crossed at all points, and the war carried into the French territory. The negotiation, in consequence, only commenced at Châtillon at a later period of the campaign. In truth, Napoleon was desirous only to gain time to complete his defensive preparations in his own dominions; and nothing was further from his intention than to withdraw behind the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees. His most devoted panegyrists admit Duc de Bassano had proposed, they would not have dared to retract, or perhaps they would not have conceived the idea. But the Emperor has lost this last favourable moment; he has given his enemies time to know his situation, and actuated them with a desire to profit by it.—*Abstract of the Negotiations of Châtillon, by the Duc de Vicence*; quoted in BIGNON, xiii. 83.

this.* Although, too, the other allied powers were really desirous of an accommodation, yet Alexander in the course of the negotiation became strongly impressed with the idea—which experience soon proved to be well founded—that no real peace was practicable with the French Emperor; and that the wisest policy was to await the course of military events, and not fetter themselves by any engagements which might prove prejudicial, in the event of ulterior success in the great measures which were in preparation. Thus the negotiation which opened under such favourable auspices, came at this time to nothing; for this plain reason, that the views of the leaders on both sides were so much at variance, that the difference between them could be adjusted only by the sword.

27. One reason why Napoleon went, in appearance at least, into this correspondence, was in order to have the benefit of the statement, to lay before the Chamber of Deputies, who were summoned to meet on the 19th December, that negotiations were in progress, without being fettered by any engagement or the acceptance of any distinct basis of peace. That assembly met accordingly at that period; but soon evinced a spirit so refractory, that he found it impossible to carry on the government until they were adjourned. The clamour was too loud, and the spirit of discontent and despair which now prevailed in almost every part of France, too deep-seated and profound, to be either stifled by the seductions, or overawed by the terrors, of the imperial authority. Napoleon opened the session in person, with great pomp. "Splendid vic-

* "The first use which the Allies have made of victory has been, say they, to offer peace to the Emperor Napoleon. Their attitude, strengthened by the accession of all the German princes, has had no influence over the conditions. . . . It is in these terms that they magnify the fault which the Emperor has committed in not giving immediate attention to their propositions. *We do not deny this fault*; however, one cannot but acknowledge that its importance is rather relative than absolute. All the fault of Napoleon at this time arises from counting too much on the duration of the pacific disposition of his adversaries."—BIGNON, xiii, 86.

tories," said he, "have immortalised the French armies in this campaign; defections without a parallel have rendered those victories unavailing, or turned them against us. France would now have been in danger but for the energy and union of the French. In these momentous circumstances, my first thought has been to summon you around me: my heart has need of the presence and affection of my subjects. I have never been seduced by prosperity; adversity will find me superior to its strokes. I have often given peace to the nations when they had lost everything: with a part of my conquests I raised up thrones for monarchs who have since abandoned me. I had conceived and executed great designs for the happiness of the world. A monarch and a father, I feel that peace adds to the security of thrones as well as to that of families. Nothing on my part is an obstacle to the re-establishment of peace; you are the natural organs of the throne; it is for you to give an example of energy which may dignify our generation in the eyes of posterity. Let them not say of us, 'They have sacrificed the first interests of their country; they have submitted to laws which England has sought in vain during four centuries to impose upon France.' I am confident that, in this crisis, the French will show themselves worthy of themselves and of me."

28. M. de Fontanes, the orator of the government, answered in his wonted style of sonorous and dignified eloquence, concluding with the exhortation "to rally round the diadem, where the lustre of fifty victories shines through a passing cloud. Fortune is never long wanting to nations which are not wanting to themselves." Napoleon rejoined:—"I will make, without regret, the sacrifices required by the basis proposed by the enemy; my life has but one object, the happiness of the French. Meanwhile Béarn, Alsace, and Franche-Comté are invaded; the cries of that part of my family agonise my heart; I call the French to the assistance of the French! I call the Frenchmen of Paris, of Brit-

tany, of Normandy, of Champagne, of Burgundy, and of the other departments, to the assistance of their brethren! Shall we abandon them in their misfortune? Peace and the deliverance of our country should be our rallying-cry. At the sight of a whole people in arms, the stranger will fly, or sign peace on the terms which he himself has proposed. The time has gone by when we could think of recovering our conquests." But in the midst of this external homage to the warlike dispositions of the Emperor, there were not wanting men bold enough in private to counsel him to come to a pacification. Caulaincourt strongly urged the immediate adoption of the basis proposed by the Allies at Frankfurt, and the publication of this adoption to the people. "Such frankness," said he, "and the confidence shown in the nation, will do more than *senatus-consulta* and decrees. Courage is not wanting, sire! what is wanted is confidence that it will not be misapplied. When the conditions accepted are known, every one will support them. With the opinion entertained of your character, whatever tends to show that your hands are bound, and that *fortune will make no change in your pretensions*, is of advantage to you. The real danger is not the force of the Allies; it is the dread generally felt that the sacrifices asked to secure a peace will only augment the pretensions which must prolong the war. Proclaim your moderation, sire! and the nation will precipitate itself, as in 1794, to defend the frontiers."

29. It was not long before the Emperor had cause to repent not having followed these wise counsels. In the senate everything went on smoothly, and nothing indicated any distrust of, or opposition to, government. But in the Chamber of Deputies matters soon assumed a very different aspect. Notwithstanding the pains which had been taken by the nomination of a president, Regnier, Duke of Massa, by the Emperor, and the filling up of all the vacant seats, twenty-three in number, by the same authority, instead of by the legal mode of election, it soon ap-

peared that a large party in that assembly were animated with a spirit which it was impossible to control. The first serious business which was committed to the senate and the Chamber was the nomination by each of a committee, to whom the documents connected with the negotiations which had been opened with the allied powers should be submitted. That appointed by the senate, consisting of Talleyrand, Lacépède, Fontanes, and others, entirely in the interest of government, gave no umbrage to Napoleon. But the list circulated by authority for the adoption of the Deputies met with a very different reception. It was rejected by a considerable majority; and a committee appointed instead, consisting of persons, with the exception of one, Lainé, heretofore unknown, and over whom the court possessed little influence. It was easy to foresee, from this commencement, that, in the present excited state of the public mind, a contest of a very serious kind awaited the Emperor with his own legislature.

30. In effect, it broke out sooner than could have been anticipated. The committee appointed to consider the diplomatic instruments communicated to them, immediately commenced their labours; and their report, drawn up by Lainé, was presented to the Chamber, in a secret meeting held on the 28th. This report bore that, to prevent the country from becoming the prey of foreigners, it was necessary to nationalise the war; and this could not be done unless the nation and its monarch were united by closer bonds. "It has become indispensable to give a satisfactory answer to our enemies' accusations of aggrandisement. There would be real magnanimity in a formal declaration, that the independence of the French people, and the integrity of its territory, is all that we contend for. It is for the government to propose measures which may at once repel the enemy, and secure peace on a durable basis. These measures would be soon efficacious, if the French nation were persuaded that the government, in good faith, aspired only to the glory of peace, and that their blood

would no longer be shed save to defend our country and secure the protection of the laws. But these words of 'peace' and 'country' will resound in vain, if the institutions are not guaranteed which secure these blessings. It appears, therefore, to the commission to be indispensable that, at the same time that the government proposes the most prompt and efficacious measures for the security of the country, his majesty should be supplicated to maintain entire the execution of the laws, which guarantee to the French liberty and security, and to the nation the free exercise of its political rights.

31. "The Confederation of the Rhine is an alliance useful only to the Germans: under it a powerful hand secured them independence. If they prefer the chains of Austria, why not abandon them to their desires? As to Holland, since the Allies insist on the conditions of Lunéville, we may withdraw without regret from provinces difficult to preserve, in which the English interest exclusively prevails, and to which the English commerce is the price of existence. Have these countries not been so impoverished by the war, that we have seen patrician families withdraw from them, as if pursued by a devastating scourge, to carry elsewhere their industry and their riches? We have need, without doubt, of courage to make the truth known to our Emperor; but with whatever perils the attempt is attended, we will incur them rather than betray his confidence: we would rather endanger our own lives than the existence of the nation.

32. "Let us attempt no dissimulation: our evils are at their height; the country is menaced on the frontiers at all points; commerce is annihilated, agriculture languishes, industry is expiring; there is no Frenchman who has not in his family or his fortune some cruel wound to heal. The facts are notorious, and can never be sufficiently brought into view. Agriculture for the last five years has gained nothing; it barely exists, and the fruit of its toil is annually dissipated by the treasury, which unceasingly devours everything to satisfy the

cravings of ruined and famished armies. The conscription has become, for all France, a frightful scourge, because it has always been carried into execution with the utmost rigour. For the last three years the harvest of death has been reaped three times a year! a barbarous war without an object swallows up the youth, torn from their education, from agriculture, commerce, and the arts. Have the tears of mothers and the blood of generations thus become the patrimony of kings? It is fit that nations should have a moment's breathing-time; the period has arrived when they should cease to tear out each other's entrails; it is time that thrones should be consolidated, and that our enemies should be deprived of the plea, that we are for ever striving to carry into the whole world the torch of revolution."

33. The reading of this report conjured up a perfect storm in the Chamber. It was so long since the words liberty and political rights had been heard within its walls, that the courtiers started as if high treason had been spoken in their presence. The president Regnier interrupted the report. "Orator," said the nominee of Napoleon, "what you say is unconstitutional."—"In what?" replied he; "there is nothing unconstitutional here but your presence." The debate was adjourned to the 30th, and a majority of four-fifths voted an address to the Emperor, and that Lainé's report should be printed and distributed. Napoleon instantly ordered the printing to be stopped, the proofs already thrown off to be seized, and refused to receive the address. He summoned the Council of State, and thus broke forth:—"Gentlemen, you are aware of the state of affairs, and the dangers of the country. I thought it fit, without being under any obligation so to do, to make a confidential communication to the Chamber of Deputies on the state of the negotiations, because I wished to associate them with my dearest interests. They have taken advantage of that communication to turn an arm against me—that is, against the country. Instead of aid-

ing me by their efforts, they restrain my own. An imposing attitude on our part can alone repel the enemy—theirs attracts him. Instead of presenting to him a front of brass, they lay bare our wounds: they demand peace with loud cries, when the only possible means of obtaining it is by seconding me in war. They complain of me: they speak of their grievances; but what time, what place, have they chosen for bringing them forward? Is it not *en famille*, and not in presence of the enemy, that they should treat of such subjects? Have I, then, been inaccessible to them? Have I shown myself incapable of listening to reason? Matters have come, however, to such a pass, that a decisive part must be taken. The legislative body, instead of uniting with me to save France, does all it can to precipitate its fall: it betrays its duties; I fulfil mine. I dissolve it.”

34. He then caused a decree to be read, which he proposed to issue, declaring that two-fifths of the legislative body had already exhausted their powers; that another fifth, on the 1st of January, would be in the same situation; and that, therefore, the legislative body was prorogued till the elections were completed. “Such,” resumed the Emperor, “is the decree which I propose to issue; and if I were assured that this very day the people of Paris, in a body, were to come to massacre me in the Tuileries, I would not the less persevere in it—for it is my duty. When the French people intrusted me with their destinies, I considered the laws given me to govern them; if I had deemed them insufficient, I would not have accepted the charge. They need not suppose that I am a Louis XVI. When I became Emperor, I did not cease to be a citizen. If anarchy is to be installed anew, I shall abdicate, and mix in the crowd to enjoy my part in the sovereignty, rather than remain at the head of affairs, when I can only endanger all, without protecting any. My determination is conformable to the law: if all would now discharge their duty, I would be invincible behind it in face of the enemy.”

35. On the day following, being the 1st January 1814, on occasion of the public reception of the authorities in the Tuileries, Napoleon broke forth in a strain of vehement invective against the legislative body. “Gentlemen,” said he, “you have had it in your power to do much good, and you have done nothing but mischief. Eleven-twelfths of you are good, the rest are factious. What do you hope for by putting yourselves in opposition? To gain possession of power? But what are your means for doing so? Are you the representatives of the people? I am so: four times I have been invoked by the nation; and four times I have had the votes of four millions of men for me. I have a title to supreme authority which you have not. You are nothing but the representatives of the departments of the nation. Your commission has been guided by the spirit of the Gironde,—M. Lainé is a conspirator, an agent of England, with which he is in correspondence by means of the advocate Desèze; the others are actuated by factious motives. I will keep my eye on M. Lainé: he is a bad man. Your report is drawn up with an astute and perfidious spirit, of the effects of which you are well aware. Two battles lost in Champagne would not have done me so much mischief.

“I have immolated my passions, my pride, my ambition, to the good of France. I hoped that you would appreciate my motives, and not urge me to sacrifices inconsistent with the honour of the nation. Far from that, in your report you mingle irony with reproach; you tell me that adversity has given me salutary counsels. How can you reproach me with my misfortunes? I have supported them with honour, because I have received from nature a strong and indomitable character; and if I had not possessed that ardent temperament of mind, I would never have raised myself to the first throne in the world. Nevertheless, I have need of consolation, and I expected it from you: so far from giving it, you have endeavoured to cover me with mire. But I am one

of those men whom you may kill, but cannot dishonour. Is it by such reproaches that you expect to restore the lustre of the throne? What is the throne? Four pieces of gilded wood covered with a piece of velvet. The real throne has its seat in the nation: you cannot separate the two without mutual injury; for the nation has more need of me than I have of the nation. What could it do without a chief and without a guide? When the question was how we could repel the enemy, you demanded institutions, as if we had them not! Are you not content with the constitution? If you are not so, you should have told me so four years ago, or postponed your demand till two years after a general peace. Is this the moment to insist on such a demand?

"You wish to imitate the Constituent Assembly, and commence a revolution? Be it so. You will find I shall not imitate Louis XVI. I would rather abandon the throne—I would prefer making part of the sovereign people to being an enslaved king. I am sprung from the people: I know the obligations I contracted when I ascended the throne. You have done me much mischief: you would have done me still more, if I had allowed your report to be printed. You speak of abuses, of vexations,—I know as well as you that such have existed: they arose from circumstances and the misfortunes of the times. But was it necessary to let all Europe into our secrets? Is it fitting to wash our dirty linen in public, instead of in the privacy of our families? In what you say there is a mixture of truth and falsehood. What, then, was your obvious duty? To have confidentially made known your grounds of complaint to me, by whom they would have been thankfully received: I do not love those who have oppressed you more than you yourselves do. In three months we shall have peace: the enemy will be chased from our territory, or I shall be dead. We have greater resources than you imagine: our enemies have never conquered us—never shall. They will be chased

across the frontier more quickly than they have entered it." The dissolution of the Chambers immediately followed this violent apostrophe, which paints the character of Napoleon better than volumes of ordinary history. Although, however, he had been so vehement in his menaces, and had denounced M. Lainé, in particular, as sold to England and a traitor to his country, yet no arrests or measures of severity followed. The Deputies retired without molestation to their departments; and the Emperor, engrossed in military preparations, forgot this transient ebullition of resistance in the legislature, or prudently dissembled his resentment, lest he should extend still further a flame which he could not extinguish. Still, however, he eluded all appearance even of closing with the terms proposed by the Allies; and declined to follow the example set on a similar crisis by Louis XIV., who saved France by the noble and well-known proclamation, in which, after showing that he had made every sacrifice to obtain peace, which was consistent with his honour or the integrity of his dominions, he called on his people as his last resource to rally round the throne.*

36. Vast preparations were made for resisting the enemy. Commissioners were sent down to all the departments to hasten the levies of men, accelerate their equipment and arming, take measures for the arming and provisioning of the fortresses, and where invasion was threatened, effect a levy *en masse*. A decree of 4th January fixed the budget at 1,176,800,000 francs, or £47,072,000 sterling; and in order to provide for this immense sum, fifty

* "In order to re-establish peace, I would have accepted conditions much opposed to the security of my frontier provinces; but the more I have evinced my readiness to treat, and my desire to dispel the distrust which my enemies affect to hold of my power and my designs, the more they have multiplied their pretensions. I have let all Europe see that I sincerely desired them to enjoy peace; and I am persuaded that my people would not consent to receive it on conditions equally contrary to justice and to the honour of the French name."—*Proclamation of Louis XIV.*, 12th June 1709. CAPEFIGUE, *Histoire de Louis XIV.*, vi. 107.

per cent was ordered to be added to the land tax; and the duties on doors and windows, as well as the personal and assessed taxes, were doubled by the sole authority of the Emperor. The commissioners sent down to the provinces on these momentous missions, however, though invested with very ample powers, were men little calculated to move the masses; being mostly old generals or decayed functionaries of the imperial court, who had no feeling in common with the great bulk of the community. But even if they had been endowed with the energy of Danton, or the fire of Mirabeau, the passions were extinct in the nation; the time was past when it was possible again to revive the revolutionary fever. A sombre feeling pervaded all classes that the wars of Napoleon were endless, and that a change of government or dynasty could alone put a stop to the ceaseless effusion of human blood. Soon after, the rapid advance of the Allies rendered all these defensive preparations of little avail; and the occupation of a third of France by their victorious armies reduced the resources and weakened the influence of the Emperor, as much as it augmented the physical means and swelled the moral strength of his antagonists.

37. The presence of external danger at this period extorted from Napoleon two important concessions in foreign diplomacy, which of themselves were calculated to have effected an entire alteration in the relations of the European states to each other, and implied a total abandonment on his part of the principal objects of his continental policy. The first of these was the treaty of Valençay, by which he agreed to the liberation of Ferdinand VII. from his confinement in France, and his restoration to the throne of Spain. The coincidence of the invasion of the south of the empire by Wellington, with the climax of discontent which the democratic leaders at Cadiz had raised against their English allies, from the glorious successes of their arms, and the entire liberation of the Peninsula from the invader's yoke,

naturally suggested to the French Emperor the hope that, by relinquishing all thoughts of retaining Joseph on the throne of Spain, and restoring the imprisoned monarch to his dominions, he might not only break the sword of Wellington in his hands, but convert the exasperated Jacobins of Cadiz into useful allies.

38. The sacrifice required was equal to nothing; for Joseph was already bereft of his dominions, and had recently arrived at Paris, accompanied only by a few baggage waggons laden with the riches of the Escorial—the poor remains of a lost crown, dishonoured throne, and plundered realm. By the advice of Talleyrand, Napoleon immediately abandoned his disconsolate brother to his fate, and opened a negotiation with Ferdinand, the object of which was to restore the captive monarch to his dominions, and re-establish peace with Spain on such terms as might be most likely to embroil that power with its English allies. He opened the communication by a holograph letter to Ferdinand, in which, accusing the English of a design to establish democracy and Jacobinism in Spain,* he professed his own desire to re-establish the good understanding which had so long subsisted between the two monarchies. Ferdinand at first was doubtful of the Emperor's sincerity, and was cautious in the answers he gave. But as soon as he was made aware of the real intentions of the Emperor, then the negotiation was not long of being brought to a conclusion. Ferdinand, wearied of his long detention at Valençay, was overjoyed at the prospect of regaining his liberty and his do-

* "My Cousin,—The present political circumstances of my empire make me desirous of winding up the affairs of Spain. England there fomented anarchy, Jacobinism, and the destruction of the monarchy and the nobility, in order to establish a republic. I cannot be insensible to the destruction of a nation so near my own states, and with which I have so many maritime interests in common. I desire, therefore, to take away every pretext for English intervention, and to re-establish the bonds of friendship and good neighbourhood which have so long existed between the two nations."

minions; and he had little scruple in agreeing to any terms which were exacted of him. He was certain that they would at all events procure for him his liberation; and he flattered himself with the secret hope that, if any of them should prove burdensome, he could avail himself of the plea that the treaty was concluded under the coercion of captivity, and was no longer binding on him or the nation after he had regained his independence.

39. It was in the middle of November, immediately after the return of Napoleon from Leipsic, that this negotiation was commenced under the direction of Maret, and by the intervention of M. Laforest, an able diplomatist who had long been ambassador of France at the court of Joseph, and had there acquired an accurate knowledge of the secret springs of influence in the Spanish councils. The Emperor wrote to Ferdinand in a conciliatory and flattering strain; representing that the affairs of his empire had inspired him with the desire to close at once the contest in the Peninsula, to put an end to the anarchy which had so long desolated its provinces, and terminate that fatal ascendancy which England, for its own selfish purposes, had converted into the means of diffusing universal ruin over its kingdoms. Ferdinand replied in dignified terms, that he could not conclude an arrangement without the consent of the Spanish nation, or at least of the Regency; and that, rather than treat without its deputies, he would spend all his life at Valençay. The Duke de San Carlos, however, was sent shortly after to Paris, where he had a long secret interview with Napoleon, who soon convinced him of the sincerity of his proposals. The Duke forthwith returned to the captive monarch, who was no sooner assured of the intention of Napoleon really to liberate him from his captivity, than he agreed to everything that was required.

40. The treaty was concluded on the 11th December, and stipulated the recognition by the Emperor of Ferdinand as King of Spain and the Indies; that

the English troops should retire from the Spanish dominions; that Port-Mahon and Ceuta should never be ceded to Great Britain; that the high contracting parties should mutually guarantee each other's dominions, and maintain the rights of their respective flags, agreeably to the stipulations of the treaty of Utrecht; and that the late monarch, Charles IV., should receive an annuity of thirty millions of reals (£300,000), and two millions of reals (£20,000), yearly to the Queen-dowager, in case of her surviving her husband. The treaty provided for its ratification by the regency established at Madrid. Thus had Napoleon and Talleyrand the address, at the conclusion of a long and bloody war, in which their arms had been utterly and irretrievably overthrown, to procure from the monarch whom they had retained so long in captivity, terms as favourable as they could possibly have expected from a long series of victories. And thus did the sovereign, who had regained his liberty and his crown by the profuse shedding of English blood, make the first use of his promised freedom to banish from his dominions the allies whose swords had liberated him from prison, and placed him on the throne.

41. The result, however, both disappointed the hopes of the French diplomatists, and saved the honour of the Spanish nation. The spirit of the Peninsular revolution, as Wellington often remarked, was essentially anti-Gallican; and though the democrats of Cadiz, in the ardour of their pursuit of absolute power, had evinced the most inveterate hostility against the English general and his gallant army, and even gone so far as to open secret negotiations with Joseph for the recognition of his title to the crown, provided he subscribed the republican constitution of 1812 [*ante*, Chap. LXXVI. § 42]; yet they recoiled from actual submission to France, and could not be brought to give their sanction to a treaty, extorted from their sovereign while in a state of captivity, which was calculated to arrest their arms in the moment of victory, and stain the

honour of a contest which already resounded through the world. The Regency and the Cortes, accordingly, had the virtue to refuse the ratification of the treaty; and although Napoleon, hoping to distract or paralyse the Spanish armies, sent Ferdinand back into Spain, where he arrived by the route of Catalonia on the 19th March, yet the treaty, as it remained without ratification, made no change in the military operations; and Spain took a part in the war down to the final overthrow of the power of Napoleon.

42. A similar feeling of necessity induced Napoleon shortly after to recede from another favourite object of his ambition, and to consent to the liberation of the Pope from his long and painful confinement at Fontainebleau. The whole of Christendom had long been scandalised at the prolonged imprisonment of the supreme Pontiff, and the French Emperor had felt the consequence of the profound indignation which it had excited, in the inveterate hostility of the Peninsular nations, as well as in the readiness with which Austria had united her forces to those of the Alliance. With the double view, accordingly, of depriving his enemies of this envenomed weapon of hostility, and propitiating Austria—from the diplomacy of which he never ceased to expect secret favour, in consequence of the matrimonial alliance—he made private overtures to the Pope at Fontainebleau early in January. What was not a little extraordinary, the person first charged with the delicate mission was a lady of rank belonging to the court of Marie Louise—the Marquise Anne Brignole of Sienna. She had several interviews with his Holiness in November; but the Pope was firm in declining to come to any accommodation till he was restored to Rome: and he persisted in the same refusal when the Archbishop of Bourges formally offered, two months afterwards, on the Emperor's part, to restore the Holy See as far as Perugia.

43. He replied, that the restitution of his dominions was an act of justice which Providence would itself work out, and which could not be the fit

subject of a treaty while the Pope was detained, to the scandal of Christendom, in a state of captivity. He added—"Possibly our faults render us unworthy to behold again the Eternal City; but our successors will recover the dominions which appertain to them. You may assure the Emperor that we feel no hostility towards him—religion does not permit it: and, when we are at Rome, he will see we shall do what is suitable." The necessities of the Emperor, however, rendered it indispensable for him to disembarass himself of the presence of the Pope, even although he could not extort from him any concessions of territory to prop up his falling empire; and, accordingly, four days afterwards, on the 22d January, Pius VII. was conveyed away from Fontainebleau towards the south of France, by Montauban and Castel Naudery. Yet even in this act of concession, the grasping disposition of the Emperor was rendered apparent: he delayed, on various pretexts, the passage of the supreme Pontiff through the south of France, hopeful that a return of fortune to his arms might enable him to retain so precious a prisoner in his power. When Paris was taken by the allied armies, he was still detained at Tarascon, near the mouth of the Rhone; and the final order for his deliverance proceeded from the provisional government which succeeded upon the fall of Napoleon.

44. Negotiations of an important character at the same time were going on, between both Napoleon and the allied powers, with Murat, King of Naples. That brave but irresolute prince, seeing clearly the approaching downfall of the Emperor, and actuated as well by his own inclinations as by the ambition of his queen, Caroline, who, after having tasted of the sweets of royalty, had little inclination to share in the ruin of her brother and benefactor, was desirous above all things, by one means or other, to secure, and if possible strengthen, in the coming catastrophe, his own throne. With this view, after the overthrow of Leipsic, when the external fortunes of the Emperor were evidently sealed, while

he still kept up a confidential correspondence with Napoleon, he advanced a column of troops to Ancona, which he occupied, proclaiming loudly his resolution to establish the independence of Italy. At the same time he secretly opened a negotiation with Prince Metternich, while he was loudly professing his desire to adhere to Napoleon if secured in the general sovereignty of Italy. In truth, it was evident that he would join his arms to whichever party should bid highest for his alliance.

45. To Napoleon he held out, that matters had now arrived at that pass when it was necessary to take a decisive part; that the menacing position of the English in Sicily rendered it wholly impossible for him to hazard the bulk of his forces to the north of the Po; but that, if the Emperor would guarantee to him the whole Italian provinces to the south of that river, and unite them all into one monarchy, he would rekindle the flame of independence in Italy, and raise such a spirit in that peninsula, that Austria should never cross the Adige.* To Metternich he at the same time represented, that the ambition of Napoleon was insatiable, as his infatuation was incurable, and that he would willingly enter into the coalition of the allied sovereigns, provided he were guaranteed the possession of his Neapolitan

* "Your Majesty need not indulge the hopes you have formed of seeing me pass the Po; for if I put that river between my army and my own dominions, I should have no means of resisting the fermentation which now prevails in Romagna, Tuscany, and my own states. Be assured, Sire! the proclamation of the independence of Italy, forming one single power of all its states to the south of the Po, would save that country: without such measure it is lost beyond redemption. It will be partitioned anew; and your sublime design of emancipating the Italian peninsula, after having covered it with glory, is for ever lost. Put at this moment the provinces beyond the Po at my disposal, and I will engage that the Austrians shall never cross the Adige. The enemy at present shake the Italians by speaking to them of independence; the hope which they have in their armies has hitherto obviated the effect of these propositions; but will they continue proof against such seductions, if the King of Naples do nothing to realise their hopes, and continue, on the contrary, to

dominions. Napoleon having returned no answer to his last and urgent demand for the establishment, in his favour, of a sovereignty embracing the whole territories to the south of the Po, he wrote a long letter to him, in which he announced that matters had now reached a crisis, and that he could no longer refuse to come to terms with the Allies.† He was as good as his word, and early in January concluded a treaty, by which it was stipulated that he should be guaranteed in his Italian dominions, and join the allied forces on the Po with thirty thousand men.

46. No sooner was this treaty signed, than Murat prepared to act in conformity to it, and on the 19th January entered Rome at the head of twenty thousand men. The slender French garrison retired into the castle of St Angelo; and thus was the second city in Napoleon's empire wrested from him by the arms, not of his enemies, but of his brother-in-law and lieutenant, the old comrade and friend whom he had raised from a private station to the throne of Naples! Murat accompanied this invasion by an energetic proclamation, in which he outstripped the most inveterate enemies of France in his denunciation of the perfidy and violence of the Revolutionary government. "Soldiers! as long as I could believe that the Emperor Napoleon combated

maintain the yoke of the stranger? It is mere delusion to suppose they will. Will your Majesty explain yourself on this vital point? Time presses; the enemy is daily reinforced. I am constrained to silence; and the season approaches when I in my turn will be driven to make a choice, and forced to join the enemy. Sire! in the name of all you have dearest in the world—in the name of your glory—delay no longer. Make peace! make it on any terms."—MURAT TO NAPOLEON, 25th December 1813. CAPEFIGUE, x. 544, 545, note.

† "Sire,—This is the saddest day of my life. I have to make a choice; and I see on the one side the inevitable loss of my dominions, my family, and possibly of my glory; and on the other, engagements at variance with my eternal attachment to your Majesty, with my unchangeable devotion to France. For four days past an Austrian commissioner, Count Neipperg, has been at Naples, proposing to me, in the name of his sovereign, a treaty of peace."—MURAT TO NAPOLEON, Jan. 10, 1813. BIGNON, xiii. 190.

for peace and the happiness of France, I fought by his side; but now it is no longer possible to give credit to that illusion. The Emperor breathes nothing but war. I would betray the interests of my native country, of my present dominions, and of yourselves, if I did not at once separate my arms from his, to join them to those of the powerful Allies, whose magnanimous intentions are to re-establish the independence of nations and the dignity of thrones. Soldiers! there are but two banners in Europe—on the one are inscribed Religion, Morality, Justice, Law, Peace, and Happiness—on the other, Persecution, Artifice, Violence, Tyranny, War, and Mourning to all nations." A caustic, though, in the main, just expression; but which sounds strangely, coming from the brother-in-law of Napoleon, and a child of the Revolution!

47. In the general fever of anxiety to preserve the dignities and possessions they had acquired, hardly any member of Napoleon's family escaped unsullied. Even Eugene Beauharnais, though a more exalted and blameless character than Murat, was not uninfected by the contagion: although he wrote publicly that he would not separate himself from his benefactor, yet he in secret received overtures from the Allies, and subsequently sent a plenipotentiary to Chatillon, to attend to his separate interests. What ultimately prevented this negotiation from coming to maturity, was not any disinclination on his part to come to an accommodation, but the impossibility of reconciling his pretensions to his Italian dominions with the ambitious views of Austria over that part of the peninsula. All heads were swept away by the torrent: every former obligation, how great soever, was forgotten. Among the rest, the Princess Eliza, Napoleon's sister, endeavoured to save her fortune in the general wreck: her uneasiness at the prospect of a downfall was extreme, and she lent a ready ear to the suggestion of Fouché when he passed through Florence, on his way back from the honourable exile which the Emperor had assigned him at Rome

and Naples—"Once Napoleon is dead, everything will fall into its natural place, and they will leave you your beautiful palazzo Pitti."

48. In the north of Europe a more honourable constancy in misfortune was exhibited; but the march of events was irresistible, and even the warmest allies of the French were at last compelled to abandon their fortunes, and range themselves on the side of the European confederacy. The Danes, whom jealousy of Russia, not less than the bitter recollection of their capital twice taken by the English, had inspired with a strong predilection for the French alliance, and who had exhibited, like the King of Saxony, an honourable fidelity to their engagements during the general defection of 1813, were unable any longer to continue the contest. Entirely severed from the armies of Napoleon by the evacuation of Germany after the battle of Leipsic; unable either to succour or derive assistance from the corps of Davoust, shut up in Hamburg; pressed by the army of the Crown-prince of Sweden on the south, and the fleets of England on the north—the Danish monarchy was menaced with immediate destruction, and the cabinet of Copenhagen had no alternative but to submit, even on the hard terms of agreeing to abandon Norway. After a short negotiation, accordingly, a treaty was concluded between Denmark and the allied powers, by which it was stipulated that the former should join the coalition against France, and bring to its support a corps, the strength of which was to be afterwards determined, to operate in the north of Germany. The King of Denmark agreed to the cession of Norway to Sweden; the King of Sweden, on his part, engaging to maintain the rights and privileges of its inhabitants inviolate; and in exchange for this painful sacrifice, the duchy of Pomerania, with the island of Rugen, were ceded by Sweden to the Danish crown. Thus was accomplished the first permanent cession of a kingdom in the north of Europe, consequent upon the wars of the French Revolution. And although history cannot contemplate without regret the

violent transference of a brave and ancient people from the government of their fathers to a stranger rule, yet the mournful impression is much alleviated by the reflection, that Denmark obtained, to a certain extent at least, an equivalent adjacent to its own territories; that the Scandinavian peninsula was thus for the first time united under one dominion, and a power all but insular established in the Baltic, which, with the support of the British navy, may possibly be able to maintain its independence in future times, even against the colossal power which overshadows the north of Europe.

49. While the grand confederacy was thus strengthening itself by fresh alliances on the shores of the Baltic and the Mediterranean, and the last allies of the French domination were breaking off from its sinking empire, the great central power of Germany was rising with portentous energy at the call of patriotism; and the military strength of its inhabitants, roused to the highest pitch by the trumpet of victory, was directed with consummate talent to the prosecution of the last and greatest object of the war—the final subjugation of the power of Napoleon, and the extrication of Europe from the thralldom of the Revolution. The accession of Bavaria to the coalition on the eve of the battle of Leipsic, had already been followed by that of all the lesser powers which formed part of the Rhenish Confederation; and the great outwork which had been erected with so much effort by Napoleon, to form the advanced post of France against Europe, had already become the outwork of Europe against France. The whole population welcomed the allied troops as deliverers; transport beat in every bosom, joy beamed from every eye; and before even the energy of the allied cabinets could arrange the different governments in their confederacy, the people had everywhere made common cause with their armies. A few of the princes, particularly the Grand-duke Charles of Dalberg, Prince Isenberg, and the Prince of La Layen, held out for the

French, and their dominions were in consequence occupied by the allied troops; but all the others gladly ranged themselves under the banners of the victorious powers. Already on the 21st October, before the sovereigns separated from Leipsic, a convention had been entered into, for the organisation of the whole forces of Germany against the common enemy, and the best development of these resources for the purposes of the war. A central administration had been formed, to direct the efforts and regulate the contributions of the states. At the head of it was placed Baron Stein, whose energy and wisdom had so early prepared in Prussia the means of resistance to the French domination.

50. The formal accession of the leading princes of the Confederation of the Rhine was soon obtained to the new league. On the very day after the convention was signed at Leipsic, the King of Würtemberg concluded a treaty with the Allies, and his contingent was fixed at twelve thousand men; the Duke of Saxe-Weimar signed his accession on the 1st, the Duke of Darmstadt on the 2d of November; and the whole lesser princes, with the exceptions above mentioned, followed their example. The Elector of Hesse stood in a somewhat different situation, as he was not a member of the Rhenish Confederacy, his states having been swallowed up in the rickety kingdom of Westphalia. He was accordingly admitted into the grand alliance by a separate treaty in the beginning of December, which immediately restored him to the possession of all his ancient dominions, with the exception of the bailiwicks of Dorheim, which had been assigned to the Grand-duke of Darmstadt. The contingent of the Elector of Hesse was fixed at twelve thousand men. The respectable but unfortunate King of Saxony had been treated with unwonted severity by the allied sovereigns after the battle of Leipsic: none of them, excepting the Crown-prince of Sweden, had visited him in his misfortunes; and he had been conveyed away, a prisoner, to Berlin, where he remained uncertain of the fate which

awaited him. But the whole civil and military resources of Saxony were at the disposal of the grand alliance; and its soldiers, borne away by the torrent, marched as cheerfully in the ranks of the Fatherland, as those of the states which had gained most by the crusade for its deliverance.

51. It was both a delicate and complicated work to arrange into one organised body the various members of the Rhenish Confederacy, and, after adjusting the pretensions, determining on the reclamations, and smoothing down the jealousies of its numerous princes, to combine the whole into one effective league for the prosecution of the war. The general enthusiasm, however, which prevailed, rendered these difficulties much less formidable than they would have been at any other time; and the previous organisation of Napoleon presented a machine ready made, and of most skilful construction, which was now applied with fatal effect against himself. By two treaties concluded at Frankfort on the 18th and 24th November, the important objects of providing for the maintenance of the grand army, and regulating the contingents to be furnished by all the German princes who had joined the confederacy, were accomplished. To effect the first object, each of the princes of the old Confederacy of the Rhine engaged to provide at once, on his own credit, a sum equal to the gross revenue of his dominions; and the payments were to be made in instalments every three months, till the whole was paid up. The sum-total thus raised at once on credit, was 17,116,500 florins, equal to about £1,770,000 sterling.

52. In addition to those ample payments in money, the most effective measures were taken to draw forth the military power of the whole states forming the Germanic Confederacy. The contingent of each state was taken at the double of that which it had furnished to the Confederation of the Rhine; the one half to be provided in troops of the line, the other half in landwehr; and in addition to this, corps of volunteers were permitted,

and the landsturm or levy *en masse* was organised and made ready for action, in all the countries which seemed to require such extraordinary precautions. The troops thus raised, amounted, independent of the forces of Bavaria, which were thirty-five thousand strong, to upwards of a hundred thousand, besides an equal number of landwehr; and they were divided into six corps. Of these, Saxony furnished twenty thousand, Hanover and Hesse twelve thousand, Würtemberg twelve thousand, and Baden eight thousand.* The most minute regulations were laid down for providing the requisite supplies, hospitals, and provisions, for this vast aggregation of men. So universal and widespread was the organisation which had now arisen for arraying Europe in a defensive league against France, and so unanimous the concord which the oppressions of the Revolution had established among nations so various, interests so opposite, and animosities so inveterate.

53. Nothing remained now but to detach Switzerland from the French alliance, and from the great salient bastion of the Alps to threaten France on the side where its defences were weakest, and the least precautions had been taken by preceding sovereigns to guard against foreign invasion. The Helvetic Confederacy, like all feeble states, without being either strongly attached to or exasperated against France, were desirous to preserve their neutrality, and anxiously sought to prevent their country from becoming the theatre of war. Aware of the great importance of securing the frontier of the Jura from invasion, if not by the attachment, at least by the interests of his mountain neighbours, Napoleon had studiously avoided both insult and injury to them, and forbore to draw those resources from their territory which the proximity of its situation, and warlike character of its inhabitants, placed within his reach. They had neither been plundered and insulted like the Prus-

* See Appendix I, Chap. LXXXIV., for a detailed account of the forces furnished by each of the states of the new German Confederacy.—SCHÖELL, *Histoire des Traités de Paix*. x. 357.

sians, nor denationalised like the Tyrol-ese: the conscription of men had been far from oppressive, and the cantons had felt the war rather in the obstruction it occasioned to foreign commerce, than in any peculiar exactions with which it had been attended. An extraordinary diet, assembled at Zurich, had already, in the middle of November, proclaimed the neutrality of the republic, and sent a body of men to the frontiers to cause them to be respected. The French Emperor readily acceded to a declaration which promised to secure France from invasion on the side where it was most vulnerable, and immediately withdrew his troops from the canton of the Tessino, which they had occupied. But the allied sovereigns were not disposed to be equally forbearing, for it was as much their interest to make their attack from the side of the Alps as it was that of their adversary to avoid it; and accordingly, having resolved to occupy part of the Swiss territory with their troops, they despatched M. Libzettern and Count Capo d'Istria to the Helvetic diet, to endeavour to obtain their consent to such a proceeding.

54. Austria had already taken the initiative in this important negotiation. On the 8th December, M. de Schrant, the envoy of the cabinet of Vienna at the Helvetic Confederacy, presented a note to the diet, in which he declared that the allied sovereigns were resolved to extricate them from their degrading state of dependence, which had now reached such a height that their orators were obliged to pronounce an annual eulogium on their oppressors. On the 20th December, M. Libzettern and de Schrant, the Austrian envoy, presented to the diet a note, in which they declared that the intention of the allied sovereigns was to deliver Switzerland from that state of dependence which, under the specious name of protection, had so long kept them in a state of thralldom; that in carrying these intentions into execution, they must of necessity enter the Helvetic territories; that they could not recognise a neutrality which existed only in name; but that they would interfere

in no respect in their internal government, and that, from the moment that their independence was really established, they would rigidly observe their neutrality. To this note was annexed the order of the day, which, on the following day, Prince Schwartzenberg was to issue on entering the Swiss territory.* This decisive step at once destroyed the influence which, under the name of mediation, the French Emperor had so long exercised in the states of the Helvetic Confederacy; and as it was followed next day by the entrance of the allied forces in great strength into their territories, it produced an immediate effect in the Swiss councils.

55. Eight days afterwards, a majority of the deputies of the old cantons,

* "The irresistible march of events in a war which all just and right-seeing men must look on in the same light, and the necessity of consolidating and securing the happy results which have hitherto flowed from it, have led the allied armies to the frontiers of Switzerland, and forced them, in furtherance of their operations, to traverse a part of its territory. The necessity of this step, and the vast results dependent on it, will probably furnish a sufficient vindication of it to all reasonable men; but that necessity, great as it is, would not have appeared a sufficient justification in the eyes of the allied powers, if Switzerland had been in a situation to maintain a true and real neutrality; but so little is this the case, that all the principles of the law of nations authorise them to regard as null the neutrality she has proclaimed. The allied sovereigns recognise, as the most sacred principle of that law, the right of every state, how inconsiderable soever, to assert and maintain its independence; they are so far from contesting that principle, that it is the basis of all their proceedings: but no state can pretend to neutrality which is not in a condition to assert, and has not in fact asserted, its independence. The pretended neutrality of a state which is habitually governed by external influence, is but a name; and while it secures to one belligerent the advantages of a substantial alliance, it exposes the other to the evils of a real hostility. When, therefore, in a war, the object of which is to impose limits to a menacing and preponderating power, such a neutrality serves as a shield to injustice, and a barrier to those who strive for a better order of things, it must disappear with the evils which have created it. No one can dispute that such is the actual position of Switzerland towards the allied powers on the one hand, and France, whose south-eastern frontier it covers, on the other."—*Declaration of the Allied Powers to the Swiss Diet*, 21st Dec. 1813. SCHÖLL, *Recueil*, ii. 8, 12.

viz., those of Uri, Schwytz, Lucerne, Zurich, Glarus, Zug, Fribourg, Bâle, Schaffhausen, and Appenzel, declared the constitution introduced by Napoleon, by his Act of Mediation, annulled; and promulgated the important principle, that no one canton should be subjected to the government of another—a declaration which, by virtually raising the hitherto dependent cantons of St Gall, Thurgovia, Argovia, and the Pays de Vaud, to the rank of independent members of the confederacy, laid the foundation of a more extended and equal confederacy in future times. On the 31st December, the allied sovereigns issued a declaration, in which they called on the Swiss to take up arms to aid in the recovery of their independence; and at the same time came under a solemn engagement not to lay them down till the independence of the Swiss Confederacy was secured, and placed under the guarantee of the great powers, and till the portions of it, especially the Valais, which had been seized by the French Emperor, were restored to their rightful owners. In these changes, although the aristocratic cantons, especially that of Berne, went cordially along with the allied powers, yet the Swiss, as a whole, were rather passive submitters to, than active auxiliaries of, their arms. But so equitable was the constitution which they ultimately established, and so complete the independence they have since enjoyed under it, that the Helvetic states have no cause to regret the transient evils which the passage of the allied forces through their territory occasioned.

56. Thus was at length accomplished that great confederacy which the prophetic mind of Pitt long ago foresaw could alone extricate Europe from the fetters of the French revolutionary power, but which the selfish ambition and blind jealousies of the European states had hitherto prevented them from forming. From the rock of Gibraltar to the shores of Archangel—from the banks of the Scheldt to the margin of the Bosphorus—all Europe was now arrayed in one vast league against

France, which was reduced entirely to its own resources. From the kingdom of Italy it could not expect succour, but might rather anticipate demands for assistance: all its other Allies were now arrayed against it; and the power which, only eighteen months before, had headed a crusade of all the western states of the Continent against the independence of Russia, was now reduced to combat, with its own unaided forces, the combined military strength of all Europe. An astonishing change to have been produced in so short a time, and strikingly characteristic of the oppression of that military tyranny which could thus, in so brief a space, reconcile interests so discordant, still jealousies so inveterate, and combine forces so far severed by language, race, and political institutions!

57. The efforts of the allied cabinets, and the enthusiastic spirit which universally prevailed among their people, had now accumulated forces so prodigious for the invasion of France, that nothing in ancient or modern times had ever approached to their magnitude. By the universal arming of the people, and establishment of the landwehr in all the German states, an enormous array had been collected, which enabled the Allies, without materially weakening their military force on the Rhine, to blockade all the fortresses on that river and the Elbe which were still in the hands of the French, and thus irrevocably sever from the French empire the numerous garrisons, still mustering above a hundred thousand combatants, which were shut up within their walls. The absurdity of Napoleon clinging with such tenacity to these advanced posts of conquest, isolated in the midst of insurgent nations, when he was contending for his very existence in his own dominions, became now strikingly apparent. They at once detached from his standards a vast army, which, if collected together, might have enabled him still to make head against his enemies, but which, in the foreign fortresses, served as so many beacons scattered through the enemy's territory, at once recalling the recollection of past oppression, and

indicating the undiminished resolution to resume it. This extraordinary resolution on the part of the French Emperor to abandon, even in his last extremity, none of the strongholds which he held in any part of Europe, and which cost him, from first to last, above a hundred thousand of his best troops, whom it compelled to surrender to bodies of ill-disciplined landwehr and militia, little superior to themselves in number, was, beyond all doubt, one of the greatest causes of his fall; and it affords a memorable example of the manner in which revolutionary ambition overleaps itself, and falls down on the other side.

58. The forces which the allied powers had collected by the end of December to co-operate in the projected invasion of France and Italy, were thus disposed. The Grand Army, still under the immediate direction, as in the former campaign, of Prince Schwarzenberg, numbered two hundred and sixty thousand combatants; and, even after deducting the usual average number of sick and non-effective, might be expected to bring two hundred thousand sabres and bayonets into the field. Its composition, however, was heterogeneous; and though it boasted the imperial guards of Russia, Prussia, and Austria within its ranks, and had the *élite* of the forces of those great military monarchies around its standards, yet it was far from being powerful and efficient, as a whole, in proportion to its gigantic numerical amount. It comprised the Austrian corps of Bubna, Lichtenstein, and Giulay; the Württembergers under their Prince-Royal; the Bavarians under Marshal Wrede; the Austrian guards and reserves, commanded by Prince Hesse-Homburg; and the German Confederates under Prince Philippe of Hesse-Homburg and Count Hochberg. But though these German troops were little short of two hundred thousand combatants, and some of them formed a noble array, yet the main strength of the army consisted in the Russian and Prussian guards, and the Russian reserves under the Grand-duke Constantine and Count Miloradowich. These magnificent

troops, nearly forty thousand strong, the very flower and pride of the allied host, with the Russian corps of Wittgenstein, twenty thousand more, all bronzed veterans who had gone through the war of 1812, formed a reserve, in itself a powerful army, which in the end operated with decisive effect upon the fate of the campaign. This immense body was destined to act on the side of Switzerland and Franche-Comté, where there were no fortresses excepting Besançon, Huningen, and Sarre-Louis, to arrest the progress of an invading army. But though the line of its invasion was thus comparatively smooth, and it was so formidable from its numerical strength and the quality of a part of its force, this huge array was seriously paralysed by the presence of the allied sovereigns at its headquarters, by the consequent subordination of military movements to diplomatic negotiation, by the known aversion of the Austrian cabinet to push matters with Napoleon to extremities, and by the cautious and circumspect character of its commander-in-chief.

59. The second army, still called the Army of Silesia, under the orders of Blücher, was composed of four veteran corps, of which two were Prussian under the command of York and Kleist, and two Russian under the direction of Langeron and Sacken. To these had recently been added two corps of German Confederates, one commanded by the Electoral Prince of Hesse-Cassel, and the other by the Duke of Saxe-Coburg. The total amount of this army was one hundred and thirty-seven thousand, of which upwards of fifty thousand were Russians inured to war and flushed with victory, and nearly forty thousand were Prussian conscripts burning with the ardour of the war of deliverance. This army was stationed on the north-eastern frontier of France, between Mayence and Coblenz, and threatened it on the side of the Vosges mountains and Champagne. In that quarter, though a double line of formidable fortresses guarded the frontier, yet, if they were blockaded, no natural barrier of any strength was interposed, after the Rhine was passed,

between that river and Paris ; and a vigorous invasion might with certainty be anticipated from the admirable quality of the troops of which the army was composed, and the well-known enterprising character of its chief.

60. The third army which was destined to co-operate in the invasion of France, was under the command of the Prince-Royal of Sweden. It comprised the Russian corps of Winzingerode, and the Prussian of Bulow, each of which was thirty thousand strong ; the corps of German confederates under the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, and that commanded by the Duke of Brunswick, each also numbering thirty thousand combatants ; fifteen thousand of Walmoden's men ; the Swedish auxiliaries, twenty thousand ; and nine thousand English, who took a part in the campaign on the banks of the Scheldt. This army mustered in all one hundred and seventy-four thousand combatants, of whom a hundred and twenty thousand, after deducting the sick and troops blockading the garrisons, might be relied on for operations in the field. But although this army was thus formidable in point of numerical amount, and the Russian and Prussian corps which it comprised were second to none in experience and valour, yet the positions of the troops, the variety of nations of which they were composed, and the peculiar political situation of their commander-in-chief, rendered it doubtful whether they would render any very efficient services in the course of the campaign. They lay on the Lower Rhine, between Cologne, and Düsseldorf ; with the iron barrier of the Netherlands, still in the enemy's hands, right in their front. And though a large proportion of the fortresses of which it was composed were unarmed or ill-provisioned, yet others, particularly Antwerp, might be expected to make a formidable defence, and would require to be besieged by considerable forces. The abilities of Bernadotte were unquestionable, and he had, on more than one occasion, rendered im-

portant services in the course of the preceding campaign ; yet his disinclination, in itself natural and unavoidable, to push matters to extremity against his old country and comrades, was very apparent ; and the hopes which he in secret cherished, of being called, on the fall of the present dynasty, to the throne of France, rendered him in the last degree unwilling to be associated in the minds of its people with the days of their national humiliation or disaster.

61. Independent of these immense armies, the allied powers had collected, or were collecting, a variety of reserves which in themselves constituted a mighty host. They consisted of the Austrian reserve, twenty thousand strong, under the Archduke Ferdinand of Würtemberg ; the Russians who were before Hamburg, to the number of fifty thousand, under Benningsen ; the Russian reserve, commanded by Labanoff, of fifty thousand, who were mustering in Poland ; the Prussian landwehr, engaged in the blockade of the fortresses on the Elbe and the Oder, to the number of fifty thousand more ; the Prussian reserve, twenty thousand strong, who were assembling in Westphalia, under Prince Louis of Hesse-Homburg ; and the Russian and Prussian force blockading Glogau, in number about fifteen thousand—in all two hundred and thirty-five thousand ; which, with the three grand armies of Schwartzemberg, Blucher, and the Crown-Prince of Sweden, already assembled on the frontier of the Rhine ; eighty thousand Austrians who, under Marshal Bellegarde, were destined to act in the north of Italy ; and a hundred and forty thousand British, Portuguese, and Spaniards, who, under the guidance of Wellington, were assailing the south of France, in Béarn, and on the frontier of Catalonia,—formed a mass of A MILLION AND TWENTY-EIGHT THOUSAND MEN, who were prepared to act against the empire of Napoleon. A stupendous force ! such as had never before been directed against any power in the annals of human warfare ; formidable alike from its discipline, its

experience, and the immense train of military munitions with which it was furnished; animated by the highest spirit, united by the strongest bonds; stimulated alike by past suffering and present victory; and guided by sovereigns and generals, who, trained in the school of misfortune, were at length cordially united in the resolution, at all hazards, to terminate the fatal military preponderance of the French empire.*

62. To oppose this crusade, Napoleon had a most inadequate force at his disposal. Not that he had not used the utmost exertions and made use of the most rigorous means to recruit his armies; or that his conscriptions on paper did not exhibit a most formidable array of combatants. But the physical strength and moral constancy of his empire were alike exhausted, and his vast levies now brought but a trifling accession of men to his standards. Since the 1st of September 1812, that is, during a period of sixteen months, he had obtained from the senate successive conscriptions to the amount of twelve hundred and sixty thousand men, in addition to at least eight hundred thousand who were enrolled beneath his banners at the commencement of that period. Of this immense force, however, embracing on paper above *two millions* of combatants, hardly two hundred and fifty thousand could now be assembled for the defence of the empire; and of these not more than two hundred thousand could by any possibility be brought forward in the field. Nearly five hundred thousand had perished or been made pri-

* AGGREGATE OF ALLIED FORCES.

Grand Army under Schwartzberg,	261,650
Army of Silesia under Blücher,	137,391
Army of the North under Bernadotte,	174,000
Russian, Prussian, and Austrian Reserves,	235,000
Austrians in Italy under Bellegarde,	80,000
British and Portuguese in France,	78,000
Anglo-Sicilian and Spanish armies in Catalonia,	62,000

Total acting against France, 1,028,041
—SCHÖLLI, *Traité de Paix*, x. 382, 383. For a detailed account of this immense force, see Appendix K, Chap. LXXXIV. It might be expected to bring 700,000 effective men into the field.

soners in the Russian campaign; three hundred thousand in the war in Saxony; two hundred and fifty thousand had disappeared in the two last Peninsular campaigns; nearly a hundred thousand were shut up in the fortresses on the Elbe or the Oder; a still greater number had sunk under the horrors of the military hospitals in the interior; and the great levy of five hundred and eighty thousand in October and November 1813, had, from the failure of the class to which it applied—in consequence of the conscription having now reached the *sons* of the generation, the mass of which had been cut off by the dreadful campaigns of 1793 and 1794—proved so unproductive, that the Emperor could not, with the utmost exertions, reckon upon the support of more than three hundred and fifty thousand men in the field, to defend the frontiers of his widespread dominions, and make head on the Rhine, on the Jura, and on the Garonne, against such a multitude of enemies.

63. Such as they were, these forces were thus distributed. Sixty thousand men were blockaded in Hamburg, Magdeburg, and Torgau; and forty thousand in the fortresses on the Oder, the Vistula, in Holland, and Italy; fifty thousand, under Eugene, in Italy, maintained a painful defensive against the Austrians under Marshal Hiller; while a hundred thousand under Soult and Suchet, in Bearn and Catalonia, struggled against the armies of Wellington and Bentinck. The real body of men, however, which the Emperor had at his disposal to resist the invasion of the Allies on the Rhine, did not exceed a hundred and ten thousand combatants, and this force was scattered over an immense line, above five hundred miles in length, from the Alps to the frontiers of Holland; so that at no period of the campaign could he collect above sixty thousand combatants at a single point. Agreeably to his usual system, of never acknowledging the paucity of his resources, and possibly in the hope of deceiving his enemies, this comparatively diminutive host was divided into eight corps. But they were the

mere skeleton of the Grand Army, and many of the regiments could not muster two hundred bayonets.

64. Victor, with nine thousand infantry, and three thousand five hundred horse, guarded the line of the Rhine from Bâle to Strasburg; Marmont, with ten thousand foot and twelve hundred cavalry, was stationed along the same river from Strasburg to Mayence. That important fortress itself, with the observation of the Rhine from thence to Coblenz, was intrusted to Count Morand, with eighteen thousand combatants. From thence to Nimeguen the frontier was guarded by Macdonald, with eighteen thousand infantry and three thousand cavalry; while Mortier, with the imperial guard and reserve cavalry, still mustering eleven thousand infantry and seven thousand horse, lay on the Yonne. Ney, with his five divisions, hardly amounting to ten thousand foot-soldiers, occupied the defiles of the Vosges mountains; and Augereau, with twelve thousand, was stationed at Lyons.* Thus, not more than seventy-five thousand infantry, and fifteen thousand horse, could be relied on to withstand the shock of above three hundred and fifty thousand Allies, who could immediately be brought into action; and even after taking into view the reserves being formed in the interior, and the depots at Metz, Verdun, Paris, Troyes, and other places,

* AGGREGATE OF FRENCH FORCES.

Blockaded in the fortresses on the Elbe,	60,000
Do. in Holland, Italy, and on the Oder,	40,000
In Italy under Eugene,	50,000
In Béarn, under Soult,	70,000
In Catalonia under Suchet,	80,000
At Lyons, under Augereau,	12,000
Grand Army under Napoleon, viz.:	
Victor,	12,500
Marmont,	10,200
Morand,	18,000
Macdonald,	21,000
Mortier,	18,000
Ney,	10,000
	89,700
Reserves in the Interior,	30,000
	331,700

—See KOCH, Tables 3 and 4; and VAUDONCOURT's *Campagne de 1814*, I. 116, 117. See also Appendix L, Chap. LXXXIV.

to which every disposable sabre and bayonet was directed—not more than a hundred and twenty thousand men could be mustered to withstand the threatened invasion, and of these little more than one-half could possibly be assembled in a single field of battle.

65. Notwithstanding their great superiority of force, the allied sovereigns hesitated before they undertook the serious step of crossing the Rhine; and opinions were much divided as to the proper place where the passage should be attempted when the enterprise was resolved on. The physical weakness of the French empire, the exhausting effects of the long-continued drain upon its military population, the despair which had seized upon the minds of a large portion of its people, from the entire failure of the vast efforts they had made to maintain their external dominions, were in a great measure unknown to the allied generals. They still regarded its frontiers with secret awe, as they had been accustomed to do, when Napoleon led forth his conquering bands to humble or subjugate every adjoining state. The catastrophes of two campaigns, how great soever, could not at once obliterate the recollection of twenty years of triumphs; and France, in its weakness, was now protected by the recollection of its departed greatness, as the Grand Army, at the close of the Moscow retreat, had been saved from destruction by the halo which played round the names of its marshals; or as the Lower Empire had so long been sheltered by the venerable letters on its standards, which, amidst the servility of Asiatic despotism, recalled the glorious recollections of the senate and people of Rome. Such was the influence of these feelings, that it required all the enthusiasm excited by the triumph of Leipsic, and all the personal influence and vigour in council of Alexander, to overcome the scruples of the allied cabinets, and lead to the adoption of a plan for the campaign based upon an immediate invasion of France with the whole forces of the coalition.

66. It was at first proposed that

Schwartzberg's army should cross the Rhine, enter Switzerland near Bâle, and spread into Italy, to co-operate with the Austrian army in Lombardy under Bellegarde; while Blucher was to invade near Mayence, and the army of the north, under Bernadotte, threatened the northern frontier on the side of Flanders. But, though this plan was warmly approved by the cabinet of Vienna, which was more intent on effecting or securing the important acquisitions which seemed to lie open to its grasp in Italy, than on pushing matters to extremities against Napoleon and the grandson of the Emperor Francis; yet it by no means coincided with the views of Alexander, who was thoroughly convinced of the necessity of striking home at the centre of the enemy's power, and had in secret become assured, that no lasting accommodation could be looked for so long as Napoleon remained on the throne of France. He not only, therefore, strongly urged at Frankfort the immediate resumption of offensive measures on the most extended scale, before France had recovered from its consternation, or Napoleon had gained time to recruit his shattered forces; but proposed the plan of invasion,* of all others the best

* "Here," said Alexander, "is the plan proposed by me, and entirely approved by the Austrian and Prussian commanders-in-chief:—Offensive operations on the part of the Grand Army between Mayence and Strasburg offer many difficulties, as we cannot leave the fortresses behind us without observation. By entering France on the side of Switzerland, we meet with incomparably fewer difficulties, that frontier not being so strongly fortified. Another advantage attending this movement is the possibility of turning the Viceroy's left wing, and thereby forcing him to a precipitate retreat. In that case, the Austrian army of Italy may advance on Lyons, so as to form a prolongation of our line, and, by means of its left wing, connect our operations with those of the Duke of Wellington, whose headquarters are now at Oleron. In the mean time, Blucher, with one hundred thousand men, may form an army of observation on the Rhine; and, without confining himself to observation, may cross that river near Mannheim, and manoeuvre against the enemy till the Grand Army reach the field of action. All the four armies—viz. the Grand Army, that of Italy, Blucher, and Wellington, will stand on one line in the most fertile part of France, forming

calculated to concentrate the whole forces of the Alliance against the centre of the enemy's power, and bring the war to an immediate and decisive issue. This plan consisted in moving the Grand Army, under Schwartzberg, into Switzerland, and causing it to enter France by the side of Bâle and the Jura, while Blucher advanced direct from the neighbourhood of Mayence on Paris, and the Prince-Royal of Sweden penetrated through the fortresses of Flanders into Picardy and Artois. In this way, not only would France be assailed by the most powerful of the allied armies on the Swiss frontier, where very few fortresses existed to check its advance, but each of the vast invading hosts would act on its own line of operations, had a ready retreat in case of disaster, and yet would be constantly converging towards a common centre, where the last and decisive blow was to be struck. It was a repetition, on a still greater scale, of the plans laid down for the preceding campaign in the conferences of Trachenberg; Switzerland being now the salient bastion which Bohemia had formerly been; and Blucher and Schwartzberg having nearly the correspondent posts assigned to them in Champagne and Flanders, which

the segment of a circle. The four armies will push forward, and, diminishing the arc, will thus draw near its centre—that is Paris, or the headquarters of Napoleon. Meanwhile your Royal Highness may advance on Cologne and Düsseldorf, and thence in the direction of Antwerp, by which you will separate Holland from France, and oblige Napoleon either to abandon that important fortress, or, if he endeavour to retain it, materially to diminish by the numerous garrison which it will require, the effective strength of his armies. The grand object is not to lose a moment, that we may not allow Napoleon time to form and discipline an army, and furnish it with supplies, our business being to take advantage of the disorganised state of his forces. I entreat your Royal Highness not to lose a moment in putting your army in motion, in furtherance of the general plan of operations."—ALEXANDER to BERNADOTTE, 29th October 1813; DANILEVSKY, *Campagne de 1814*, pp. 17, 18. A grand design! very nearly what was ultimately carried into effect, and a memorable proof of the foresight and ability of the Russian Emperor, especially when it is recollected this letter was written only ten days after the battle of Leipsic.

they had on the banks of the Elbe and the sands of Prussia.

67. The advantages of this plan were so obvious, that it at once commanded the assent of the allied generals; and, in the middle of December, the troops over the whole line were put in motion in order to carry it into effect. The grand army of Schwartzenberg lay close to Switzerland; that of Silesia extended along the line of the Rhine, from Mannheim to Coblenz. The former was intended to enter France by the road through the Jura from Bâle, by Vesoul, to Langres—a city of the highest importance in a strategetical point of view, as being the place where several roads from the south-east and eastern frontier intersect each other. But the prodigious multitude of this army, which, after every deduction, was above two hundred thousand strong, could not advance by a single road, and it required to effect its ingress by all the routes leading across the Jura from Switzerland into France. It was divided accordingly into nine columns, which were directed to move by different roads towards Paris and the interior.

68. The first, under Count Bubna, after entering Switzerland by Bâle, was to advance by Berne and Neuchâtel to Geneva, and thence descend the course of the Rhone to threaten Augereau, who occupied Lyons with twelve thousand men. The second, commanded by Count Giulay, was to move direct on the great road, through Montbéliard and Vesoul, to Langres. The third, under Lichtenstein, was intrusted with the blockade of Besançon, the only fortress of importance which required to be observed on the Jura and Swiss frontier. The fourth, under Colloredo, was to march on Langres by Giulay's left; at the same time that it detached two divisions, or half its force, to blockade Auxonne, and advance by Dijon to Auxerre. The fifth, led by Hesse-Homburg, consisting of the Austrian reserves, followed on the same road through Dijon to Châtillon; while the sixth and seventh, under the Prince of Würtemberg and Marshal Wrede, who had now entirely

recovered of his wound received at Hanau, were to cross the Rhine below Huningen, and at Bâle; and after leaving detachments to blockade the fortresses of Huningen, Belfort, and New Brisach, move on by Colmar towards Nancy and Langres. Lastly, the eighth, under Barclay de Tolly, with the splendid Russian guards and reserves, was to take the direction from Bâle to Langres, as a reserve to Giulay and Wrede; and the ninth, under Wittgenstein, was to cross the Rhine at Fort Louis, below Strasburg, and after leaving detachments to observe Strasburg and Landau, advance towards the Vosges mountains, and after crossing them, take the direction of Nancy. Thus this great army was to be spread over an immense line nearly three hundred miles in breadth, from Strasburg to Lyons, occupying the whole country between the Rhine and the Rhone; and how vast soever its forces might be, there was reason to fear that, from their great dispersion, no very powerful body could be collected on any one point, and that possibly its detached corps might be outnumbered by the comparatively diminutive, but more concentrated troops of the French Emperor.

69. Blücher's army, at the same time, received orders to prepare for active operations; and it was accordingly brought, about Christmas 1813, to the close vicinity of the Rhine, between Coblenz and Darmstadt. Unbounded had been the impatience of the ardent veteran at the delay of two months which had succeeded the advance of the Allies to the Rhine; and he never ceased to urge upon the allied sovereigns that they should not give Napoleon time to recover from his defeats, but move with the utmost expedition across the Rhine to Paris. At the same time, however, with a caution which could hardly have been expected from his impetuous character, he dissembled his wishes, and, in the hope of throwing the enemy off their guard, spread abroad the report that the invasion of France was to take place on the side of Switzerland, and that he, much to his regret, was

merely to maintain a defensive position on the right bank of the Rhine. The better to give currency to these reports, he busily employed himself in purveying for the wants of his troops, as in winter quarters. At length, on the 26th December, the long-wished-for orders arrived, and the Prussian general immediately made preparations for concentrating his troops and crossing the Rhine. His instructions were of the simplest description—to cross the river, form the blockade of Mayence, and without heeding the other fortresses on the Moselle and the Meuse, to push forward, never halting, across France into Champagne, so as to be in readiness, by the 26th January, to join Prince Schwartzenberg between Arcis and Troyes.

70. These were the armies which were destined to commence immediate operations for the invasion of France; but the force of the Prince-Royal of Sweden was also concentrated on the Lower Rhine, and was intrusted with a subordinate, but very important part in the general plan of operations. It was well known that this ambitious prince, distracted between his obligations to the Allies, and his hopes of being advanced, upon Napoleon's fall, to the throne of France, was very much at a loss how to proceed, and felt great reluctance at engaging in any invasion which might embitter the feelings of the French people against him, and endanger the brilliant prospects which he flattered himself were opening before him. Aware of these peculiarities in his situation, the allied sovereigns assigned to Bernadotte and his powerful army the less obtrusive, but still important part of completing the conquest of Holland, delivering Flanders, besieging Antwerp, and, in general, pressing Napoleon on his north-eastern frontier. To co-operate in these important operations, so interesting to England, and involving the very matters connected with the Scheldt which had originally led to the war [*ante*, Chap. ix. § 120], Sir Thomas Graham, who had returned to England on account of ill health after the passage of the Bidassoa, was despatched with nine

thousand British troops to Holland, and landed at Rotterdam in the end of December. The movements of the Prince-Royal, however, were to the last degree tardy. It was long before his operations against the Danes in the north of Germany were concluded; and all the ardour of the generals under his command could not bring forward his numerous columns to co-operate in the general attack upon France; until, fortunately for the common cause, the firmness of Lord Castlereagh overcame his repugnance, and two of his corps were brought up at the decisive moment to reinforce Marshal Blücher, where they rendered the most important service to the cause of Europe.

71. The whole troops which were assembled for the final operations of the war were animated with the highest spirit, and buoyant with the most sanguine expectations. More even than the awful catastrophe of the Moscow campaign, the result of the German contest had roused an enthusiasm, and spread a confidence, among the allied forces, which, under adequate guidance, rendered them invincible. The disasters of the French could no longer be ascribed to the cold. Inequality of numbers could not palliate repeated defeats on equal fields; unconquerable spirit in the patriot ranks, irresistible ardour in the commencement of the campaign, had evidently supplied the want of military experience, and overwhelming force had prostrated consummate talents at its close. Confidence, therefore, was now founded on solid grounds. The long-established military *prestige* of the French armies had passed over to the other side: it is by the last events that the opinion of the great bulk of men is always determined. To the ardent passion for liberation which had characterised the war of independence, had succeeded, now that the deliverance had been effected, another desire scarcely less general, and to warriors, perhaps, still more exciting; that of obliterating the recollection of former defeats by the magnitude of present triumphs, and making the enemy drain to the dregs the cup of humiliation he had so long held to their own lips.

72. Indescribable was the ardour which this passion awakened in the allied ranks. All had wrongs to avenge, insults to retaliate, disgraces to efface; and all pressed on with equal eagerness to effect the hoped-for consummation. The Russians were resolute to return at Paris the visit paid to them at Moscow—the Austrians to retaliate on the French the destruction of the ramparts of Vienna—the Prussians to replace the sword of the Great Frederick at Sans-Souci, accompanied by the sabre of Napoleon from the Tuileries. In fine, the common feeling in the allied armies at this period cannot be better expressed than in the words of Marshal Blücher, in a letter written on 31st December 1813: “At daybreak to-morrow morning I shall cross the Rhine; but before doing so, I intend, together with my fellow-soldiers, to wash off in the waters of that proud river every trace of slavery. Then, like free Germans, we shall set foot on the frontiers of the great nation which is now so humble. We shall return as victors, not as vanquished, and our country will hail our arrival with gratitude. Oh! how soothing to us will be the moment when our kinsmen shall meet us with tears of joy!”

73. But although the forces of the alliance were thus vast, and the spirit of its armies thus elevated, no small anxiety pervaded the minds of its chiefs; and the great objects of the confederacy never were nearer being frustrated than when on the point of accomplishment. Success was already beginning to spread its usual seeds of discord among the sovereigns; separate interests were arising with the prospect of common spoil; ancient animosities reviving with the cessation of common danger. The Emperor of Austria, naturally solicitous for the continuance in the hands of his daughter and her descendants of the sceptre of France, had communicated to his cabinet an anxious desire to postpone, by all means in their power, the adoption of extreme measures against Napoleon; and the whole address of Metternich was employed to attain the object of humbling the once-dreaded conqueror sufficient-

ly, to render him no longer formidable to his neighbours, and tractable to their wishes, without actually precipitating him from the throne. The Emperor of Russia, on the other hand, actuated by no such interest, more intimately acquainted with the character of the French Emperor, and smarting under the recollection of severe wrongs, both personal and national, which he had experienced at his hands, was strongly impressed with the necessity, at all hazards, of prosecuting the war with the utmost vigour against him; and never ceased to maintain, that it was by such means only that the peace of Europe could be secured, and the independence of the adjoining states placed on a solid foundation.

74. In this opinion the King of Prussia, who, when he drew the sword had thrown away the scabbard, and whose dominions lay immediately exposed to the first burst of returning vengeance on the part of Napoleon, entirely acquiesced. But still the weight of Austria, the talents of Metternich, and the necessity of not hazarding anything which might break up the confederacy, rendered the adoption of the bolder game a matter of great difficulty; and more than once, in the course of the short campaign which followed, had well-nigh frustrated the principal objects of the alliance. The danger was the more imminent, that serious jealousies were already breaking out among the lesser powers in Germany, as to the manner in which their separate interests were to be arranged after the great debate of the Revolution had subsided; that the pretensions of Russia to Poland, of Prussia to Saxony, and of Austria to Italy, were already exciting no small disquietude among far-seeing statesmen; and that even among the diplomatists of England, at the allied headquarters, a considerable difference of opinion existed as to the course to be pursued in future;—Lord Aberdeen deferring to the views of Metternich, that, to preserve a due equipoise in Europe, peace on reasonable terms should be concluded with the French Emperor; and Sir Charles Stewart, with Lord Cathcart, being in-

clined to the bolder counsels of Lord Castlereagh, which tended to the entire dethronement of Napoleon, and held, that no lasting peace could be looked for in Europe without "the ancient race and the ancient territory" for the French nation.*

75. But, whatever germs of future division might be arising in the allied councils, there was no stay in the moral torrent which now rolled with impetuous violence towards the French frontier, and no change in the noble sentiments with which their chiefs strove to animate their warriors. It was in these words that, on the eve of crossing the Rhine, Alexander thus addressed his troops:—"Warriors! Your valour and perseverance have brought you from the Oka to the Rhine. We are about to cross that great river, and enter that proud country with which you have already waged such cruel and bloody war. Already have we saved our native land, covered it with glory, and restored freedom and independence to Europe. It remains but to crown these mighty achievements by the long-wished-for peace. May tranquillity be restored to the whole world! May every country enjoy happiness under its own independent laws and government! May religion, arts, science, and commerce, flourish in every land for the general welfare of nations! This, and not the continuance of war and destruction, is our object. Our enemies, by piercing to the heart of our domin-

ions, wrought us much evil; but dreadful was the retribution: the divine wrath crushed them. Let us not take example from them: inhumanity and ferocity cannot be pleasing in the eyes of a merciful God. Let us forget what they have done against us. Instead of animosity and revenge, let us approach them with the words of kindness, with the outstretched hand of reconciliation. Such is the lesson taught by our holy faith: Divine lips have pronounced the command, 'Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you.' Warriors! I trust that, by your moderation in the enemy's country, you will conquer as much by generosity as by arms, and that, uniting the valour of the soldier against the armed, with the charity of the Christian towards the unarmed, you will crown your exploits by keeping stainless your well-earned reputation of a brave and moral people."

76. Memorable words! not merely as breathing the noble feelings of the sovereign, who thus, in the moment of victory, stayed the uplifted hand of conquest, and sought to avenge the desolation of Russia by the salvation of France, but as indicating the spirit by which the contest itself was animated on the part of the Allies, and the strength of that moral reaction which, based on the principles of religion, had now surmounted all the interests of time, and communicated its blessed spirit even to the stern warriors whose valour had delivered the world. When Napoleon crossed the Niemen, he addressed his followers in the words of worldly glory; he struck the chord which alone could vibrate in the hearts of the children of the Revolution: he said of Russia, "Fate drags her on; let her destinies be fulfilled," (*ante*, Chap. LXXI. § 73). When Alexander approached the Rhine, he spoke to his soldiers in the language of the Gospel: he strove only to moderate the ferocity of war; he ascribed his victory to the arm of Omnipotence. Such was the spirit which conquered the Revolution: this it was, and not the power of intellect, which delivered the world; and when Providence deemed the time arrived for crushing the

* "If Napoleon were forced from the throne of France, much difference of opinion might exist on the great question of a successor. I was clearly of opinion, that the re-establishment of the Bourbons would be more acceptable to England than any other arrangement which could possibly be made. Others maintained that it might be policy to keep Buonaparte on the throne, with his wings clipped to the utmost, in preference to restoring the hereditary princes, who might again assume a sway similar to the times of Louis XIV., and become formidable alike to England and the powers on the Continent. The difficulty at this crisis consisted in fixing upon the fundamental principles to be adopted, and the points to be obtained; and it seemed indispensable that the government of England should send their minister of foreign affairs to the theatre of action, as no one could act with the same advantages."
—LORD LONDONDERRY'S *War in Germany*, 244.

reign of infidelity, the instruments of its will were not the forces of civilisation, but the fervour of the desert.

—“And now all earth
Had gone to wrack with ruin overspread,
Had not the Almighty Father, where he sits
Shrined in his Sanctuary of Heaven secure,

Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
This tumult, and permitted all, advised,
That his great purpose he might so fulfil,
To honour his anointed Son, avenged
Upon his enemies, and so declare
All power on him transferred.”*

* *Paradise Lost*, vi. 669.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

LAST STRUGGLE OF NAPOLEON IN FRANCE.—FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE CAMPAIGN TO THE ARMISTICE OF LUSIGNY. JAN. 1—FEB. 18, 1814.

1. “On the 31st December 406,” says Gibbon, “the united and victorious army of the Suevi, the Vandals, and the Burgundians, crossed the Rhine, when its waters were most probably frozen, and entered without opposition the defenceless provinces of Gaul. This memorable passage of the northern nations, who never afterwards retreated, may be considered as the fall of the Roman empire in the countries beyond the Alps; and the barriers which had so long separated the savage and civilised nations of the earth, were from that fatal moment levelled with the ground.” On that day fourteen hundred and seven years—at midnight on the 31st December 1813—the united and victorious army of the Russians, Prussians, and Austrians, at the same place crossed the same river; and that memorable passage may justly be regarded as the fall of the French empire beyond the Rhine! History has not preserved a more striking example of the influence of physical and lasting causes on the fortunes of the human species, or of that permanent attraction which, amidst all the varieties of religion, civilisation, language, and institutions, impels the brood of winter to the regions of the sun.

2. But if this extraordinary coincidence demonstrates the permanent influence of general causes on the mi-

gration and settlements of the species, the different character and effects of the two invasions show the vast step which mankind had made in the interval of fourteen hundred years which separated them. “The banks of the Rhine,” continues the same author, “before the barbarians appeared, were crowned, like those of the Tiber, with elegant houses and well-cultivated farms; and if a poet descended the river, he might express his doubt on which side was situated the territory of the Romans. This scene of peace and plenty was suddenly changed into a desert, and the prospect of the smoking ruins could alone distinguish the solitude of nature from the desolation of man. The flourishing city of Mentz was surprised and destroyed, and many thousand Christians were inhumanly massacred in the church; Worms perished after a long and obstinate siege; Strasburg, Spire, Rheims, Tournay, Arras, Amiens, experienced the cruel oppression of the German yoke; and the consuming flames of war spread from the banks of the Rhine over the greater part of the seventeen provinces of Gaul. That rich and extensive country, as far as the ocean, the Alps, and the Pyrenees, was delivered to the barbarians, who drove before them, in a promiscuous crowd, the bishop, the senator, and the virgin, laden with the

spoils of their houses and altars." The same provinces were invaded fourteen hundred years after by the confederated Austrians, Prussians, and Russians, the descendants of those whose track had been marked by such frightful devastation; but how different the inroad of the civilised and Christian from the rude and barbarian host! No sacked cities marked the progress of Alexander's march—no slaughter of unarmed multitudes bespoke the triumph of the allied arms; the plough and the anvil plied their busy trade in the midst even of contending multitudes; and but for the occasional ruin of houses, or wasting of roads, on the theatre of actual conflict, the traveller would have been at a loss to tell where the track of invasion had passed.* The changes of time make no alteration on the durable causes which direct the progress of conquest, or determine the ultimate fate of empires; but they modify in the most important manner their spirit and effects. They have not averted the sword of northern valour, but they have tempered its blade, and mitigated its devastation.

3. On the 26th December, orders were secretly despatched to the different corps of Blücher, communicating the time and place of crossing the Rhine; and the troops were brought up on the succeeding day to their respective points of destination. Sacken was to effect his passage near Mannheim, by means of a flotilla which had been collected at the confluence of the Neckar; York and Langeron, on a bridge of boats at Caubé, near Bacharach; while St Priest was to force his way across opposite to Coblenz, by means of the boats on the Lahn, and by the aid of the island of Niederwirth, opposite to that town. During the night of the 31st, Sacken's

corps, which had the King of Prussia at its headquarters, assembled at the spot where the Neckar falls into the Rhine. On the opposite bank was a redoubt, which commanded the mouth of that river and the town of Mannheim, and which it was necessary to carry before a bridge of boats could be established. At four on the following morning, a party of Russian light infantry was embarked in boats and rafts; and, favoured by the thick darkness, succeeded in crossing to within a few yards of the opposite bank before they were discovered. The French immediately opened a vigorous fire of cannon and musketry, and successive detachments of the Russians required to be brought over before the work could be carried; while the bright flashes of the guns illuminated the opposite bank, and displayed the dense masses of the invaders on the German shore, crowding down to the water's edge, burning with ardour, but in silent suspense awaiting the issue of the enterprise. At length the redoubt was carried at the fourth assault; and its garrison, consisting of three hundred men, were made prisoners. The rising sun showed the Russians established on French ground, and in possession of the intrenchment. Strains of martial music, resounding from all the regiments, now filled the air; the King of Prussia, coming up to the victors, was greeted with loud cheers, and the passage proceeded without interruption. By six o'clock in the evening the pontoon bridge was completed, and the whole corps passed over; while at the same time Blücher in person, with Langeron and York, crossed the Rhine without opposition at Caubé, and St Priest effected his passage at Coblenz with very little fighting. In one of the squares of the city, the prefect, on the occupation of Moscow by the French, in 1812, had erected a monument, with the inscription, "In honour of the memorable campaign of 1812." Colonel Mardenke, who had been appointed Russian commander of Coblenz, left the monument untouched, but under the inscription caused the following words to be cut

* A few weeks after hostilities had ceased, the author visited the theatre of war at Paris; and in Champagne, especially in the vicinity of Soissons, Craonne, and Laon, the scene of such obstinate and repeated conflicts in March 1814, no traces of devastation were to be seen, except a few burnt houses and loop-holed walls in places where severe fighting had actually occurred.

—“Seen and approved by the Russian commander of Coblenz in 1814.” *

4. The Grand Army under Schwartzenberg had entered the French territory at a still earlier period. On the night of the 20th December, six Austrian columns passed the Rhine, between Schaffhausen and Bâle, and immediately inundated the adjacent districts of Switzerland and France. This immense body, above two hundred thousand strong, shortly after pursued, under their different leaders, their respective destinations. Bubna, with his corps, which was the left wing, marched by the flat country of Switzerland towards Geneva; Hesse-Homburg, Colloredo, Prince Louis of Lichtenstein, with Giulay and Bianchi, forming the centre, took the great road by Vesoul towards Langres; while Wrede, the Prince-Royal of Würtemberg, and Wittgenstein, with their respective corps, which composed the right wing of the army, crossed below Bâle, between that town and Strasbourg, and moved across Lorraine and Franche-Comté, until they arrived abreast of the centre on the road to Langres. None of these corps met with any opposition. Victor, who had not above ten thousand combatants at his disposal, after providing for the garrisons of the fortresses on the Upper Rhine, was unable to oppose any effective barrier to such a prodigious inundation; it spread almost without resistance over the whole level country of Switzerland, and, surmounting the passes of the Jura, poured with fearful violence into the plains of Lorraine.

5. The march of the different columns met with hardly any interruption. Count Bubna arrived in ten days before Geneva, which capitulated at once, the garrison being permitted to retire into France. After occupy-

ing that city, he sent out detachments, which made themselves masters, with as much ease, of the passes of the Simplon and the Great St Bernard; thus interposing entirely between France and Italy, and cutting off the communication between Napoleon's forces and those of the Viceroy on the plains of Lombardy. The French garrison retired to Lyons, whither they were followed, early in January, by the Austrian commander, who, however, did not deem himself in sufficient strength to attack Augereau, who was now at the head of fifteen thousand men in that important city. He contented himself, therefore, with observing the town at a little distance, and occupying the whole course of the Ain from the Lake of Geneva to its walls. Meanwhile the centre, in great strength, pressed forward on the high-road from Bâle to Paris by Montbéliard, Vesoul, and Langres. Vesoul was entered early in January; Besançon, Belfort, Huningen, were invested a few days afterwards; while Victor, wholly unable to withstand the concentrated masses of five corps of the enemy, numbering eighty thousand sabres and bayonets in their ranks, and finding himself inadequate to the task assigned him by Napoleon, of defending the passes of the Vosges mountains, fell back, after some inconsiderable skirmishes, towards the plains of Champagne. In vain Mortier was ordered up by the Emperor to support him on the road to Paris by Troyes: even their united forces were inadequate to make head against the enemy; and on the 16th the important town of Langres, the most valuable, in a strategical point of view, in the whole east of France, from the number of roads of which it commands the intersection, was abandoned by

* The inscriptions in the square in front of the church of St Castor in Coblenz, are in these lines:—

AN. MDCCCXII.

MÉMOIRE PAR LA CAMPAIGNÉ

CONTRE LES RUSSES,

SOUS LA PRÉFECTURE DE JULES DOZAN.

VU ET APPROUVÉ PAR NOUS, COMMANDANT RUSSE DE LA VILLE DE COBLENTZ.

1 JAN., 1814.

the two marshals, and immediately taken possession of by the allied forces.

6. While the south-eastern provinces of France were thus overrun by the Allies under Schwartzenberg, the progress of the army of Silesia, led by the impetuous Blücher, on the side of Mayence, was not less alarming. The cordon of troops opposed to them, in no condition to withstand such formidable masses, fell back at all points towards the Vosges mountains. Marmont, who had the chief command in that quarter, retired on the 3d of January to Kayerslautern, so often the theatre of sanguinary conflict in the earlier periods of the war. Unable, however, to maintain himself there, he retreated behind the Sarre, the bridges of which were blown up, and shortly after took a defensive position between Sarre-Louis and Sarreguemines. But the two corps of York and Sacken having concentrated in his front, he did not feel himself in sufficient strength to withstand an attack, and resumed his retrograde movement toward the Moselle. Blücher upon this divided his army into two parts, York being intrusted with the pursuit of Marmont, and the observation of the powerful fortresses of Metz, Thionville, and Luxembourg; while he himself, with Sacken's corps, marched to and occupied the opulent and beautiful city of Nancy, the keys of which he sent, with a warm letter of congratulation, to the Emperor Alexander. Meanwhile Langeron, with his numerous corps, forming not the least important part of the army of Silesia, having crossed the Rhine at Bingen on the 3d, had completed the investment of Mayence and Cassel, detaching only one of his divisions, that of Olsooief, to support his veteran commander. But Blücher himself, burning with ardour, advanced with indefatigable activity, though the force under his immediate command was reduced, by the numerous detachments and fortresses to be blockaded in his rear, to less than thirty thousand men. With this inconsiderable body, wholly composed, however, of Russian veterans, he not only opened up a communica-

tion by his left with the Grand Army at Langres, but himself pushed on to Brienne, which he occupied in force. His advanced column was even moved forward to St Dizier, which was taken after a sharp conflict with Marmont's rear-guard.

7. Thus, in twenty-five days after the invasion of the French territory had commenced, the allied armies had succeeded, almost without firing a shot, in wresting a third of it from the grasp of Napoleon. The army of Silesia had conquered the whole country from the Rhine to the Marne, crossed the former frontier stream, as well as the Sarre, the Moselle, and the Meuse; passed the formidable defiles of the Vosges and Hunsrück mountains, and finally descended into the open and extensive plains of Champagne. Schwartzenberg's forces had in a month passed the Upper Rhine, and traversed part of Switzerland, surmounted the broad and lofty ridge of the Jura, and wound in safety through its devious and intricate valleys; overran the whole of Franche-Comté, Lorraine, and Alsace, descended into the plains of Burgundy, and entered into communication, by means of its right wing, with the army of Silesia, along the valley of the Meuse, while its left had occupied Geneva and the defiles of the Aîn, and threatened Lyons on the banks of the Rhone. Thus their united forces stretched in an immense line, three hundred miles in length, in a diagonal direction across France, from the frontiers of Flanders to the banks of the Rhone. All the intermediate country in their rear, embracing a third of the old monarchy, and comprehending its most warlike provinces, was occupied, its fortresses blockaded, and its resources lost; and the vast masses of the Allies were converging from the south-east and north to the plains of Champagne, and the vicinity of Chalons. That town had been already immortalised by the dreadful battle, decisive of the fate of Europe, which had taken place there, fourteen hundred years before, between Attila and the forces of the Roman empire under Aetius—a striking proof of the per-

manent operation of those general causes which, amidst every variety of civilisation and military skill, and in every era of the world, bring the contending hosts which are to determine its destinies to the same theatres of conflict.

8. The army of the Crown-Prince of Sweden, which threatened France on the side of Flanders, though not so far advanced as the hosts of Blücher and Schwartzberg, was still making some progress, and caused sensible disquiet to the French Emperor. Of that army only three corps were ready to take a part in the war; the remainder, with the Crown-Prince himself, who was in no hurry to approach the theatre of final conflict, being still in Holstein, or the neighbourhood of that duchy. These three corps, however, were slowly advancing to the scene of action: the first, commanded by the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, had crossed the Lech at Arnheim, and was moving through Flanders; another, under Bulow, was before Antwerp, where it was supported by a body of nine thousand British troops under Sir Thomas Graham; and part of a third, under Winzingerode, was at Düsseldorf, on the Rhine. But the remainder did not reach France till the middle of February. Chernicheff, who commanded Winzingerode's advanced guard, was burning with anxiety to cross the river; and at length, though with no small difficulty, extracted a reluctant consent from his more circumspect commander to attempt the passage at the confluence of the Roer. It was effected with little difficulty on the 12th January: the French, astonished at the boldness of the enterprise—undertaken in open day, of crossing a broad river surcharged with masses of ice, in the front of armed redoubts—opposing hardly any resistance.

9. Winzingerode's corps now slowly advanced towards Brussels: and Macdonald, who commanded the French forces in that quarter, fell back with his troops in all directions. Juliers was speedily evacuated, Liege was soon after blockaded, and in a few days taken by the Cossacks; while Macdon-

ald abandoned all the country between Brussels and the Rhine, and concentrated his forces at Namur. A division of three thousand foot and six hundred horse, despatched by General Maison from Antwerp, to endeavour to drive the Cossacks out of Liege, was defeated after an obstinate engagement at Saint Tron, near the gates of that city, by Benkendorf and Chernicheff; a success which not only secured the possession of the town, but, what was of still more importance, gave the Allies the command of the passage of the Meuse. Discouraged by this check, General Maison made no further attempt to retard the advance of the enemy: Macdonald retired, in obedience to the commands of Napoleon, towards Laon, abandoning all the open country of Flanders to the enemy, and leaving Antwerp to its own resources. Namur was immediately occupied by Winzingerode, but he was compelled to halt there some days, in consequence of the small amount of force, now reduced to thirteen thousand men, which the necessity of blockading so many places in his rear left at his disposal. Bulow meanwhile formed the blockade of Antwerp, and Macdonald was rapidly falling back towards Laon and Chalons; so that the whole forces of the Allies occupied a vast line, above five hundred miles in length, extending from Antwerp by Namur, Brienne, Langres, and Auxonne, to Lyons, from the banks of the Scheldt to those of the Rhone.

10. Thus, within a month after they had commenced the invasion of the French territory, the Allies had gained in appearance, and in one sense in reality, very great advantages, without either sustaining loss or experiencing resistance. Above a third of France had been conquered; the resources of that large portion of his dominions in men and money were not only lost to Napoleon, but, in part at least, gained to the invaders. The *prestige* of his invincibility was seriously lessened by so wide an inroad upon the territory of the great nation. But, on the other hand, to a commander possessed of the military talent and discerning eye of the French Emperor, his situa-

tion, though full of péril, was not without its advantages, and he might with reason hope to deal out upon the plains of Champagne strokes equal to the redoubtable blows which first laid the foundation of his fame on the Italian plains. The force at his disposal, though little more than a third of that which was at the command of the Allies, was incomparably more concentrated. His troops were all stationed within the limits of a narrow triangle, of which Paris, Laon, and Troyes formed the angles: while the vast armies of his opponents, stretching across France from the Scheldt to the Rhone, were alike unable either to combine their movements with accuracy, or to succour each other in case of disaster. The views of the cabinets which directed them were by no means in unison. Austria, leaning on the matrimonial alliance, was reluctant to push matters to extremities, if it could by possibility be avoided; Russia and Prussia, influenced by no such connection, were resolute to push on, at all hazards, to Paris; while the councils of England, which in this diversity held the balance, were divided between the expedience of taking advantage of the present commanding position of the allied armies to secure a glorious peace, and the chance, by pursuing a more decided policy, of precipitating the revolutionary dynasty from the throne. Thus it might reasonably be expected that the military councils of the allied cabinets would be as ruinous as their diplomatic divisions; and Napoleon entertained sanguine hopes that, while the Austrians, in pursuance of the temporising system of Metternich, hung back, the Russians and Prussians, led by the bolder views of Alexander and Blücher, might be exposed to attack with equal chances, and possibly at an advantage.

11. An attentive observer of the prodigious flood of enemies which was inundating his territories, Napoleon was, during the first three weeks of January 1814, indefatigable in his efforts to prepare the means of arresting it. He was first informed of the invasion of his territories when coming

out of his cabinet on his way to the meeting of the legislative body, which has been already described [*ante*, Chap. LXXXIV. § 27]. Preserving his usual firmness, he said: "If I could have gained two months, the enemy would not have crossed the Rhine. This may lead to bad consequences; but alone I can do nothing: if unaided, I must fall; then it will be seen that the war is not directed against me alone." His exertions were mainly employed in organising and despatching to the different armies the conscripts who were daily forwarded to Paris from the southern and western provinces of the empire, and replacing the garrisons in the interior from which they were drawn by National Guards, or levies who had not yet acquired any degree of military consistency. These troops, as they successively arrived, were reviewed with great pomp in the Place Carrousel; but their number fell miserably short of expectation, and evinced in the clearest manner that the military strength of the empire was all but exhausted.

12. The better to conceal his real weakness, and in the hope of imposing at once on his own subjects and his enemies, the most pompous account of these reviews was uniformly published next day in the *Moniteur*, and the numbers who had defiled before the Emperor announced at four or five times their real amount; insomuch that, in a single month, more than two hundred thousand men were enumerated, and it would have been supposed the Emperor was about to take the field with a force as great as that with which he had combated the preceding year on the Elbe. But no one knew better than the Emperor the real amount of the troops at his disposal; and the moment they had defiled before the windows of the Tuileries, every sabre and bayonet was straightway hurried off to the armies in front of the Allies, which, according to old usage, were divided into eight corps, though they did not in all muster above a hundred thousand effective combatants in the field. Yet so great was his dread, even in this extremity,

of democratic excitement, that it was only on the 8th of January—a fortnight before he set out to take the command of the army—that, by a decree, he again organised a National Guard in Paris. Even when he did so, especial care was taken, by the nomination of Marshal Moncey to the command, and by the selection made both of officers and privates to fill its ranks, to show that it was established rather to guard against internal agitation than foreign aggression, and that the real enemy it was intended to combat was to be found, not in the bayonets of the Allies, but in the workmen of the Faubourg St Antoine.

13. Previous to setting out to take the command of his troops, Napoleon made his final dispositions for the government during his absence from the capital. To announce his immediate arrival with the army, he sent forward Berthier some days before he himself set out, and meanwhile he organised with Savary and the Council of State the means of maintaining tranquillity in the capital, and carrying on the direction of affairs. The regency was conferred by letters-patent on the Empress Marie Louise; but with her was conjoined on the day following his brother Joseph, under the title of lieutenant-general of the empire. On the 23d the Emperor prepared a military solemnity, calculated to rouse the national feelings in the highest degree. It was Sunday; and, after hearing mass, he received the principal officers of the National Guard in the apartments of the Tuileries. The Empress preceded him on entering the apartments; she was followed by Madame de Montesquieu, who carried in her arms the King of Rome, then a lovely child of three years of age. His blue eyes and light hair bespoke his German descent; but the keen look and thoughtful turn of countenance betrayed the mingled Italian blood. He wore the uniform of the National Guard, his golden locks fell in luxuriant ringlets over his rounded shoulders, and his little eyes beamed with delight at the mili-

tary garb in which he was now for the first time arrayed.

14. Napoleon took the child by the hand, and advancing into the middle of the circle, with his head uncovered and a solemn air, he thus addressed them:—"Gentlemen, I am about to set out for the army: I intrust to you what I hold dearest in the world—my wife and my son. Let there be no political divisions: let the respect for property, the maintenance of order, and, above all, the love of France, animate every bosom. I do not disguise that, in the course of the military operations which are to ensue, the enemy may approach in force to Paris: it will only be an affair of a few days; before they have elapsed I shall be on their flanks and rear, and annihilate those who have dared to violate our country." Then, taking the noble child in his arms, he went through the ranks of the officers, and presented him to them as their future sovereign. Cries of enthusiasm rent the apartments; many tears were shed; a sense of the solemnity of the moment penetrated every bosom; and cold, indeed, must have been that heart which did not then thrill with patriotic ardour. The apartment where this memorable scene occurred was the same which, twenty years before, had witnessed the degradation of Louis XVI., when that unhappy monarch had been compelled to put on the red cap of liberty, and Napoleon had witnessed with such indignation the tumultuous assemblage which thronged the gardens of the Tuileries [*ante*, Chap. VII. § 71, *et seq.*] On the following day Napoleon made all the necessary preparations for his departure, burned his most secret papers, and gave his final instructions to Joseph and the Council of State. At three in the morning of the 25th, he embraced the Empress and his son FOR THE LAST TIME, and set out for the army. He never saw them again. Revolution had run its course; in the very spot where its excesses commenced, its chief began to drink the bitterest draught of the waters of affliction. Fate destined for the fa-

ther, mother, and son, unheard-of reverses or disgrace. For Napoleon—Elba, Waterloo, St Helena; for the Empress—the exile of Parma, and the disgrace of the Count de Neipperg; for the heir of the Imperial fortunes, a brief discrowned life and the simple tomb of Schoenbrunn.

15. Count Bertrand, in the absence of Berthier, accompanied Napoleon in his carriage; they breakfasted at Chateau-Thierry, and arrived in the afternoon at Chalons-sur-Marne, where the headquarters of the army were established. The presence of the Emperor, as usual, restored confidence both to the troops and the inhabitants, which the long-continued retreat and near approach of the enemy to the capital had much impaired. Shouts of "Vive l'Empereur!" broke from the crowds which assembled to witness his passage through any of the towns which he traversed; with them were mingled the exclamation, "A bas les droits réunis!" They did not cry, "A bas la conscription!"—a deplorable proof of the selfishness of human nature; they strove rather to save their own money than the blood of their children. Napoleon spent the evening in receiving accounts from his officers of the position of the troops and the progress of the enemy. They were sufficiently alarming. The Grand Army of Prince Schwartzberg, descending by several roads from the Vosges mountains, was pressing in vast numbers through the plains of Burgundy, and already threatened Troyes, the ancient capital of Champagne; Blucher had passed Lorraine, reached St Dizier, and was rapidly stretching, in communication with the Grand Army, across to the Aube. The French troops, falling back on all sides, were converging towards Chalons: Victor and Ney, after having evacuated Nancy, had already reached Vitry-le-Français; while Marmont was between Saint Mihiel and Vitry, behind the Meuse. Twenty days of continued retreat had brought those scattered bands, which lately had lain along the line of the Rhine, from Hungen to Bâle, to within a few leagues

of each other, in the plains of Champagne. Disorder and confusion, as usual in such cases, were rapidly accumulating in the rear. Crowds of fugitives, which preceded the march of the columns, crossed and spread consternation among the advancing bodies of conscripts which were hastening up from Paris; and already that dejection was visible among all ranks, which is at once the forerunner and the cause of national disaster.

16. By the concentration of the retreating columns, however, Napoleon had collected about seventy thousand effective combatants, of whom fifteen thousand were admirable cavalry; and although part of these were still at a considerable distance from the centre of action, yet he wisely resolved at once to assume the offensive. Twelve hours only were devoted to rest and preparation at Chalons, and on the 26th headquarters were advanced to Vitry. Early on the following morning the march was resumed; and at daybreak the advanced guards met the leading Cossacks of Blucher's army, which were moving from St Dizier, where they had passed the night, towards Vitry. The Russians, wholly unprepared for any such encounter, were taken at a disadvantage and worsted. The victorious French, with loud shouts, re-entered St Dizier, which had been some days in the hands of the Allies, where they were received with the most lively enthusiasm. The allied generals, meanwhile, inspired with undue confidence by the long-continued retreat of the French troops, and ignorant of the arrival of the Emperor at Chalons, were in a very unprepared state to receive an encounter. Blucher, with characteristic impatience and recklessness of consequences, had formed his army into three divisions, which advanced in different lines, and widely separated from each other: he himself with twenty-six thousand men having advanced to Brienne, where headquarters were established; while York, with twenty thousand Prussians, was at St Mihiel on the Meuse, and Sacken was at Lesmont, fifteen miles distant. Thus Napoleon, by his ad-

vance to St Dizier, had cut the army of Silesia in two, and he had it in his power either to fall on one of these detached corps with an overwhelming force, or to desile towards Chaumont and Langres, to repel Schwartzberg and the Grand Army. He resolved to adopt the former plan, justly deeming Blucher the most resolute as well as formidable of his opponents; the one, therefore, whom it was both most probable he might take at a disadvantage, and most important that he should disable by an early disaster. He continued, therefore, his march against the Prussian general without interruption, plunged without hesitation into the forest of Der, which could only be crossed in that direction by deep country roads: on the 28th he reached Montierender, and on the day following, by daybreak, the army was advancing in great spirits against Blucher, who lay within half a day's march, at Brienne, wholly unconscious of the approaching danger.

17. Had Napoleon reached the Prussian general before he had received any intimation of his approach, it is certain that a great disaster would have befallen him; for he had only under his immediate command two divisions of Olsoofef's corps, that of Sacken being at Lesmont, at a considerable distance. About noon, however, an officer was brought in prisoner with despatches, which proved to be of the highest importance, as they contained an order from Napoleon to Mortier to draw near and co-operate in a general attack on Blucher at Brienne. This at once revealed the presence of the Emperor, and the imminence of the danger. The Prussian general instantly sent off orders to Sacken to advance to his support with all possible expedition; and prepared himself to retire towards the Aube if he was attacked by superior forces, as his whole cavalry was already across that river, and the open plains of Chappagne exposed the infantry to great risk should they combat without that arm. At this critical moment, when he was every instant expecting to be attacked, Count

Pahlen's cavalry of Wittgenstein's corps, belonging to the Grand Army, appeared in rear, and, on Blucher's request, immediately marched forward to the front of Brienne. Forming on the road by which the enemy was expected, this body of horse covered Sacken's movement from Lesmont. Intelligence of Napoleon's advance at the same time reached Schwartzberg at Chaumont; and Alexander, who had arrived there that very day from Langres, immediately gave instructions to Barclay, with the Russian guards and reserves, to come up with all possible expedition from the rear. At the same time, he sent out orders in all directions for the concentration of the Grand Army. But before the orders could be received the blow had been delivered, and Blucher had been exposed to a rude encounter at Brienne-le-Château.

18. The French troops encountered the most serious obstacles, and underwent dreadful fatigue all the 28th, in forcing their way through the deep and miry alleys of the forest of Der. The frost, which it was expected would have removed every difficulty, had given way, and the thaw which succeeded had rendered the execrable cross-roads all but impassable. It was only by the greatest efforts that the guns and artillery-waggon could be dragged through; but by the zeal and ardour of the peasants of the forest, who harnessed themselves to the guns, and toiled night and day without intermission, the difficulties were at length overcome; and on the morning of the 29th the troops were extricated from the wood, and on their march across the open country to Brienne. The curate of Maizière acted as their guide; he had escaped from the hussars of the Prussians, and threw himself before Napoleon, who recognised in him an old college companion at Brienne, whom he had not seen since they studied together, equal in rank and prospects, twenty-five years before! Soon the troops approached the town, and discovered the Prussians drawn up in successive lines in front of its

buildings, and strongly occupying with their artillery the beautiful terraces which lie along its higher parts.

19. Brienne stands on a hill sloping upwards to the castle, which stands on an eminence adjoining its summit; and its streets, after the manner of those in Genoa and Naples, rise in successive tiers above each other to the highest point. Olsoofief's guns, with Pahlen's dragoons, occupied, as an advanced guard, the great road between it and Maizière; and it was absolutely necessary at all hazards to keep possession of that line, as it commanded the only access by which Sacken could effect his junction with the commander-in-chief. This duty was most gallantly performed by these brave officers, and the ground allotted to them strenuously maintained, from two in the afternoon, when the action commenced, till the whole of Sacken's corps had defiled through the streets, and effected its junction with the infantry of Olsoofief in rear, when they gradually retired towards the lower part of the town.

20. Encouraged by the retreat of the enemy's rear-guard, Napoleon now pressed vigorously on with all the forces he could command; and from the successive arrival of fresh troops, while the action was going on in front of the town, they were very considerable. His numerous guns were hurried forward to the front, and, opening a concentric fire on the town, discharged a shower of bombs and shells which speedily set it on fire, and reduced to ashes a considerable part of its buildings, including the college where Napoleon had been educated, where he had passed the happy and as yet unambitious days of childhood, and where he had learned the art of war which he now let loose with such devastating fury on the scenes of his infancy. A column of infantry, through the flaming tempest, burst into the town, and charging, amidst the spreading conflagration, through the streets, took twelve Russian guns. A battery, however, which Sacken established, commanding the French left, checked the advance of the troops destined

to support this vigorous onset; and Pahlen's and Wassilchikoff's dragoons charging the assailants in flank, they not only lost the guns they had taken, but were driven out of the town with the loss of eight pieces of their own. The fire continued with great vigour on both sides till nightfall, but the town remained in the hands of the Russians; gradually it slackened as darkness overspread the horizon; and Blucher, deeming the battle over, retired to the chateau to rest a few hours after his fatigues, and survey from its elevated summit the position of the vast semicircle of watch-fires, which marked the position of the enemy to the west of the town.

21. He was still on the top of the building, when loud cries were heard in the avenues which led to it, immediately succeeded by the discharge of musketry, and vehement shouts at the foot of the castle itself. The old marshal had barely time to hasten down stairs, accompanied by a few of his suite, when it was carried by a body of French grenadiers, who, during the darkness, had stolen unperceived into the grounds of the chateau. In his way to the town, he was told by a Cossack, who came riding up at full speed with the account, that the French had again burst into Brienne; and, by the light of the burning houses, he distinctly perceived a large body of the enemy coming rapidly towards him at full trot. Even in this extremity, however, the marshal would only consent to turn aside into a cross lane, where he was leisurely proceeding off at a walk, when Gneisenau, seeing that the enemy were rapidly gaining upon him, said, "Can it be your wish to be carried in triumph to Paris?" Blucher upon this put spurs to his horse, and with difficulty regained his troops. About the same time, several French squadrons charged with loud hurrahs along the street, where Sacken was issuing orders. There was neither time nor avenue to escape, and with great presence of mind he backed his horse into the shadow of a house in the street, which was the darker from the glare of the flames

behind it, while the furious whirlwind drove past: the dragoons in their haste taking no thought of, nor even observing, him who two months afterwards was governor of Paris! Blucher upon this ordered the town to be cleared of the enemy, which was immediately done; but though Olsooief advanced to the attack of the castle, he was always repulsed with loss: the assailants, from the light of the burning houses, being distinctly seen, while the defenders were shrouded in darkness. At two in the morning, the Prussian field-marshal drew off his whole force to the strong position of Trannes, on the road to Bar-sur-Aube, where the Grand Army was; and the smoking and half-burnt ruins of Brienne remained entirely in the possession of the French.

22. In this bloody affair the Russians only were engaged: both parties fought with the most determined resolution, and each sustained a loss of about three thousand men—a great proportion, considering the numbers who combated on either side. It is a remarkable circumstance, characteristic of the desperate chances of the death-struggle which was commencing, that at the very time when Blucher and Sacken so narrowly escaped being made prisoners, Napoleon himself was still nearer destruction; and a Cossack's lance had all but terminated the life which still kept a million of armed men at bay. The bulk of the French army was bivouacking in the plain between Maizière and Brienne; and the Emperor, after having inspected their positions, was riding back, accompanied by his suite, to the former town, in earnest conversation with General Gourgaud, when General Dejean, who commanded the patrol in front, suddenly turned and cried aloud, "The Cossacks!" Hardly were the words spoken, when a party of these enterprising marauders dashed across the road: Dejean seized the foremost, and strove to plunge his sabre in his throat. The Cossack, however, disengaged himself, parried the blow, and, continuing his career, made with his lance in rest at the horseman with the

cocked hat and grey riding-coat who rode in front. A cry of horror arose in the Emperor's suite: Corbineau threw himself across the lancer's path, while Gourgaud drew his pistol and shot him dead, so near Napoleon that he fell at his feet! The suite now rapidly came up, and the Cossacks, ignorant of the inestimable prize almost within their grasp, and seeing the first surprise had failed, dispersed and fled. On the day following, the Emperor, perceiving that the enemy had entirely evacuated Brienne, transferred his headquarters to its castle. The sight of the scenes of his youth, and of the sports of his boyhood, recalled a thousand emotions, to which he had long been a stranger. The past, the present, and the future flitted in dark array before him; and he strove to allay the melancholy of his reflections by magnificent projects for the future restoration of Brienne, and the establishment of a palace or a military school, or both, in the much-loved cradle of his eventful career.

23. Meanwhile the allied generals, now thoroughly alarmed, made the most vigorous efforts to concentrate their forces. Early on the morning of the 30th the whole Grand Army marched to Trannes, with the exception of Wittgenstein and Wrede's corps, which were ordered to Vassy and St Dizier to cover the right, and open up a communication with York's corps, which was approaching from that direction. At the same time, Blucher's troops were drawn together from all quarters; and the Allies, having now concentrated an overwhelming force in the two armies, resolved to give battle. Above a hundred thousand men were assembled under the immediate command of the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia, exclusive of Collaredo's men, twenty-five thousand more, who were at Vandœuvres during the action; and Wittgenstein's detached corps. The 31st passed over without any offensive movement on either side, while the allied troops were rapidly coming into line—an inactivity on the part of Napoleon so inexplicable, considering that

he was inferior in force, upon the whole, to his antagonists, and therefore was certain to lose by giving them time to concentrate, that Alexander more than once was led to doubt whether he was really with the opposite armies.

24. Meanwhile the Allies, in admirable order, took up their ground; and their generals, from the heights of Trannes, which overlooked the whole adjacent country, anxiously surveyed the theatre of the approaching battle. The centre, consisting chiefly of the Russians under Blücher's command, was posted on the elevated ridge of Trannes, with Barclay de Tolly's reserve behind it; the hereditary Prince of Würtemberg's corps composed the right wing, which stood at Getanie; Giulay's Austrians formed the left, with Colloredo in reserve. With great delicacy, Schwartzberg intrusted the general command of the whole to Blücher, who had commenced the conflict with such spirit on the preceding day. Upon this, Napoleon, finding himself overmatched, and that the allied army, instead of being surprised in detail, was perfectly prepared and hourly increasing in strength, made dispositions for a retreat. But previous to this it was necessary to restore the bridge of Lesmont, the only issue by which his columns could recross the Aube. The French line was drawn up directly opposite to that of the Allies, and extended from Dienville on the right, through La Rothière and La Giberie in the centre, to Chaumesnil and Morvilliers on the extreme left; forming the two sides of a right-angled triangle, facing outwards, of which La Giberie was the turning-point.

25. Perceiving that, contrary to his previous custom, Napoleon remained motionless awaiting an attack—a striking indication of the altered state of his fortunes—Schwartzberg gave orders to Blücher to commence the battle, and it took place on the 1st of February. The weather was dark and gloomy: a cold wind, swelling at intervals into fitful gusts, driving heavy snow-showers before it, obscured every-

thing till one o'clock in the afternoon, when the sky cleared, and the receding mist discovered the French army, about fifty thousand strong, drawn up in order of battle. Gérard commanded the right, Marmont the left, and Napoleon himself directed the centre, having Mortier, Ney, and Oudinot in reserve immediately behind it. To distinguish the allied troops, who belonged to six different sovereigns, and were in every variety of uniform, from the enemy, orders were given that they should all, from the general to the private soldier, wear a white band on the left arm. The adoption of this badge made General Jomini suggest to Alexander, that it might give rise to surmises as to the intentions of the allied sovereigns regarding the Bourbons. "What have I to do with them?" replied the Czar: a striking proof how much even those who are intrusted with the supreme direction of affairs are themselves impelled in the most important events by a power of which they are the unconscious and unforeseeing instruments.

26. The monarchs now gave the orders to attack; and Prince Schwartzberg having sent a confidential officer to inquire of Blücher what plan of attack he would recommend, instead of specifying movements, he replied—"We must march to Paris; Napoleon has been in all the capitals of Europe: we must make him descend from a throne which it would have been well for us all that he had never mounted. We shall have no repose till we pull him down." Meanwhile Giulay advanced on Dienville, the Prince of Würtemberg on La Giberie, Sacken on La Rothière, Wrede on Morvilliers. So heavy was the ground, that Nikitin, who commanded Sacken's artillery, was obliged to leave half his guns in position on the ridge of Trannes, and harness the horses belonging to them to the other half, thirty-six in number, with which he advanced to the attack. Ten fresh horses were in this way got for each of the heavy guns, six to the light, and five to the caissons; and with this additional strength the cannon were dragged through the deep

clay, and formed in line under a heavy discharge from the French artillery. The infantry destined for their protection being still far in the rear toiling through the miry fields, Napoleon caused a large body of horse to charge the guns; but the Russian cannoneers, with admirable coolness, placed the charges under cover of their cloaks close beside the pieces, to save time in carrying them; and having done so, withheld their fire till the horse were within six hundred yards, when they opened so tremendous a discharge, that the assailants were quickly obliged to retreat. Snow then fell with such thickness, that the nearest objects were hardly visible; the additional men and horses were sent back for the thirty-six pieces left behind at Trannes, which were brought to the front before the darkness cleared away.

27. While this was going on in front, the infantry and cavalry of Sacken's corps approached, and the action commenced at all points. The Prince of Würtemberg drove the enemy from a wood which they occupied in front of La Gibérie, and threading his devious way through a narrow path between fishponds, at last reached the open country, and immediately commenced an attack on the villages of La Gibérie and Chaumesnil, which were carried after a bloody struggle. Napoleon upon this directed a portion of his Guards and reserves to regain these important posts, which formed, as it were, the salient angle of his position, and supported their attack by the concentric fire of a large part of his artillery. The efforts of these brave men proved successful, and the villages were regained; but the Prince returned to the charge in front, supported by Wrede, who assailed them in flank, and by their united efforts the village of La Gibérie was again won and permanently held by the Allies. Meanwhile Sacken in the centre led his troops in beautiful array against La Rothière and the French batteries adjacent. So steady was their advance, that the infantry were in many places headed by their regimental bands. Count Lieven, with the vanguard,

pushed the attack with such vigour, that he reached the church of La Rothière, around which a bloody conflict arose, although the snow fell so thick that the combatants were frequently obliged to suspend their fire, from being unable to see each other. At this critical moment the Russian dragoons, under Lanskoj and Pantchenlidzeff, advanced, broke the French cavalry, and, following up their success, charged and captured a battery of twenty-eight guns in the enemy's centre. At the same time the Prince of Würtemberg made himself master of a battery of nine guns between La Gibérie and La Rothière, turned sharp to his left, attacked the latter village in flank, and expelled the French from every part of it; while Wrede carried Chaumesnil and Morvilliers, with twelve guns, on the extreme left of the line. Thus the French centre and left were entirely broken through and beaten; and although their right still stood firm at Dienville, and had repulsed all the attacks of Giulay's Austrians, yet the battle before six o'clock seemed to be clearly decided in favour of the Allies.

28. Napoleon, however, had been too long a victorious general to despair as yet of the contest. Oudinot came up opportunely from the neighbourhood of Lesmont with two fresh divisions; and the Emperor, putting himself at the head of the dragoons of Colbert and Piri, and bringing up every disposable gun he had left, directed a general attack on La Rothière. Perceiving the concentration of the French forces on this decisive point, Blucher, too, put himself at the head of his reserves, and advanced to sustain the encounter. It was late when these two redoubtable antagonists met in arms; the shades of night already overspread the field, which was only partially illuminated by the feeble rays of the moon. The first attack of the French was irresistible; the village was carried amid loud cheers; but the Emperor of Russia immediately brought up the grenadier regiments of Little Russia and Astrachan, which again drove the enemy out at the point of the bay-

onet, the whole grenadier corps and cuirassiers of the Guard being brought up to support the assault. In the struggle which ensued, the division Duhesme was almost entirely destroyed. Both parties fought with the utmost resolution. Napoleon and Blücher in person directed the attacks; but at length the French were overpowered and driven out of the greater part of the village; while at the same time Giulay on the extreme right of the French, at midnight, after a sixth assault carried Dienville. The whole villages and ground held by the French in the commencement of the battle were now in the hands of the Allies; and Napoleon, seeing the day irrecoverably lost, gave orders to burn the portion he still held of La Rothière, and drew off his shattered troops to Brienne, under cover of the thick darkness of a winter's night.

29. The cause of Napoleon appeared now altogether desperate. He had suddenly collected his troops and made a fierce irruption into the heart of the enemies' armies; but instead of striking any of his former terrible blows, he had met everywhere with the most obstinate resistance; his onset had served as the signal for the concentration of their vast armies, and he had finally been defeated in a pitched battle on the ground which he himself had chosen. In the last action he had lost six thousand men, including a thousand prisoners, and seventy-three pieces of cannon, wrested from him in fair fight; while the Allies were only weakened by two-thirds of that number. The *prestige* of a first victory was lost by him, and gained by his opponents. Nine thousand of his best soldiers had fallen, or been made prisoners, since hostilities had recommenced; discouragement, almost despair, was general in his ranks; and it was difficult to see how the future advance of a host of enemies was to be arrested, when less than a half of their armies had defeated so well-conceived and daring an enterprise by his whole disposable force. Nor did subsequent events weaken the force of this impression: on the contrary, they strongly confirmed it, and

seemed to presage the immediate dissolution of the French power. Napoleon returned at midnight to Brienne; and such was his anxiety lest the enemy should take advantage of the confusion of his retiring columns to make a nocturnal attack, and complete his ruin, that, not content with incessantly asking if there was anything new, he himself stood for some hours at the windows of the chateau of Brienne, which overlooked the field, anxiously watching to see if any unusual movement around the bivouac fires indicated the commencement of an irruption. Nothing, however, prognosticated such an event; the flames were steady, and gradually declined as night advanced; and at four on the following morning, the Emperor, satisfied he was not pursued, gave orders for a retreat by Lesmont to Troyes.

30. This first and most important victory, gained on the soil of France over the arms of Napoleon, produced the most unbounded transports in the allied armies. During the progress of the action, Alexander and Frederick-William were spectators from the heights of Trannes of the success of their arms, and testified the most lively sense of their gratitude to the victorious generals and chiefs by whom it had been effected. "Tell the field-marshal," said the former to Blücher's aide-de-camp, "that he has crowned all his former victories by this glorious triumph." The day after the battle, the sovereigns, ambassadors, and principal generals, supped together in the chateau of Brienne; and Blücher, striking off, in his eagerness, the necks of the bottles of champagne with his knife, quaffed off copious and repeated libations to the toast, drunk with enthusiasm by all present, "*Nach Paris!*" (to Paris). Yet, although such were the anticipations which universally prevailed, and not without reason, of an immediate march to the French capital, it may be doubted whether Blücher made as much of his superiority of force as he might have done; and whether Napoleon in his place would not have made the success at La Rothière far more decisive than

it was. Certainly, if the position of the French army—forming the two sides of a right-angled triangle facing outwards, with the Aube, traversed only by a single bridge at Lesmont, in its rear,—and that of the Allies, pressing them with superior forces on both sides up against the impassable river, be taken into consideration, it might have been expected that more decisive results would have been obtained. In fact, such would have been secured, if, instead of directing the weight of his attacks against La Rothière and La Giberie in front, the Prussian marshal had more strongly supported the assault, which in the end proved decisive, of Wrede on Chaumesnil and Morvilliers in flank.

31. In truth, however, such was the discouragement and disaster which resulted to the French army from this calamitous action, that it brought Napoleon to the very brink of ruin. On the day after the battle, the army defiled in great confusion over the bridge of Lesmont; and Marmont, who was left with twelve thousand men to cover the retreat, soon found himself beset, as Victor had been by the Russians at the Beresina, by Wrede's corps, above twenty thousand strong. It was only by the most vigorous exertions, seconded by the heroic devotion of his followers, that the brave marshal succeeded in repelling the repeated attacks of the Bavarians, urged on to the charge by the personal direction of the Emperor Alexander, who exposed himself in the thickest of the fight. In the afternoon a thick snow-storm suspended the combat, and Marmont took advantage of it to withdraw his troops across the river. The Russians, disconcerted by this bloody encounter, gave no further molestation to their retreat. Nevertheless, it proved to the last degree disastrous to the French. On the day following, Napoleon with all his forces fell back to Troyes, the capital of Champagne, where Mortier with his corps was already established, erecting barricades, running up palisades, establishing batteries, breaking out loopholes in the houses of the suburbs, and making every preparation for a vigorous defence.

32. The situation of the town of Troyes, containing twenty-two thousand inhabitants, in the midst of an extensive plain at the confluence of the Barse and the Seine, was such as to render it little capable of standing a siege; while at the same time it afforded opportunities, on the right bank of the latter river, of keeping even a superior enemy several days at bay. Napoleon resolved to make use of it for this latter temporary purpose, to gain time for the further concentration of his troops; and in this endeavour he was much aided by the dilatory conduct of Schwartzberg in continuing the pursuit. The Austrians, Bavarians, and Würtembergers, who, from the direction which the retreating French army had taken, found themselves foremost in following it, were so tardy in their movements, that they literally lost sight of the enemy; and for two days it was unknown at headquarters whether the main body of the French had retreated in the direction of Arcis, Chalons, or Troyes. Already the secret reluctance of the Austrian cabinet to push matters to extremity against Napoleon, which exercised so powerful an influence on the fortunes of the campaign, was becoming very apparent. Yet, notwithstanding this slackness in the pursuit, such was the effect of a retrograde movement upon the spirits of the French soldiers, and such the impression produced on the minds of the young conscripts by the hardships they had undergone since they took the field in that rigorous weather, that six thousand deserted their colours, and disappeared during the retreat to Troyes; and the army reached that town fifteen thousand weaker than when Napoleon, a week before, had given the signal of advance from Chalons.

33. The future plan of operations resolved on by the allied sovereigns on the 2d February at the castle of Brienne, and which proved so disastrous in its consequences as to have well-nigh rendered abortive all the vast efforts which had been made for the invasion of France, was, that the Grand Army and army of Silesia, instead of acting together, or in concert, when their mass

was irresistible, *should separate*, and act on different lines of operation. Blücher, with the army of Silesia, was to advance upon Chalons, and thence to follow the course of the Marne to Paris, through Chateau-Thierry and Meaux; while Prince Schwartzberg was to move on to Troyes, and descend the valley of the Seine by Montereau to the same capital. Want of provisions and of forage, which already began to be severely felt, if such an enormous multitude of men and horses was kept united, was the reason assigned for this most imprudent dislocation; as if any reason short of absolute necessity could justify the separation of the two armies to such a distance that they could not render aid to each other, in the presence of such a general as Napoleon, still at the head of seventy thousand men, in a central position between them. It would seem as if, forgetting that the concentration of the two armies the autumn before had wrought out the deliverance of Germany, and that their recent union had all but secured the conquest of France, they were determined to give every facility to a prolongation of the war, and to afford to the French Emperor an opportunity for dealing out, on the right and left, those redoubtable blows by which, fourteen years before, he had prostrated Wurmser and Alvinzi on the banks of the Adige.

34. The disastrous consequences of this separation of force were speedily apparent. It was not that Schwartzberg had not a sufficient force in his own army to crush Napoleon; but that, separated from Blücher and the army of Silesia, the daring resolution was wanting in all but Alexander, which could alone lead to decisive results. Austrian diplomacy, anxious to save the French Emperor from a total fall, now, as on so many former occasions, became predominant over military councils; and Napoleon, relieved from all disquietude on the side of the Grand Army of Austria, was able to turn his undivided attention to the strokes which he meditated against that of Silesia, more immediately under the directions of Russia and Prus-

sia. No sooner, therefore, did he receive intelligence of the separation of the two armies, and that Blücher, in obedience to his instructions, was moving towards Chalons-sur-Marne, while Schwartzberg's huge masses were slowly drawing around Troyes, than he resolved to descend the course of the Seine towards Paris, and thus facilitate his junction with the reinforcements of veteran troops which were approaching, drawn from the army of Soult. He did this in the hope that, when he had in this manner repaired his losses, he would be enabled to strike a blow with effect against the flank of the army of Silesia, when advancing towards the capital. With this view, he allowed his troops to repose during three days at Troyes; and so imposed upon the enemy by the good countenance which he maintained in front of that town, and by a vigorous sortie which he made beyond the Barse, that the Austrian general, instead of advancing, deemed it necessary to draw back his headquarters to Bar-sur-Aube, and throw two corps across the Seine, in order to make a general attack at once on both banks. Napoleon had no intention of risking a general engagement where he stood; and his troops having somewhat recovered from their fatigues, he broke up with his whole army early on the morning of the 6th, and reached Nogent on the road to Paris on the following evening. The headquarters of the allied army were immediately advanced, and on the 7th were established in Troyes, which they took the most anxious precautions to preserve from pillage or disorder of any sort.

35. Though the retreat of the French army down the Seine to Nogent was a prudent measure, profoundly calculated, and which speedily led to the most brilliant results, yet it produced at first the most ruinous effects upon the army. The hopes of the soldiers were entirely dissipated by this long-continued retreat; it was seriously feared that Paris itself would ere long be abandoned: the cause of Napoleon, and of the Revolution, seemed at an end. They felt the same despair as

the Russians had done in retiring from Smolensko towards Moscow. The troops marched in sullen and gloomy silence over the wet and dreary roads: the ominous question, "Where are we to stop?" was in every mouth. Nor were the spirits of the troops revived when they reached Nogent, and the army, receiving orders to halt, made preparations by mining the bridge, loopholing the houses, and barricading the streets, to dispute the passage of the Seine. Moreover, the most disquieting intelligence was received from all quarters. The defection of Murat was announced from Italy; Antwerp was blockaded by the Anglo-Prussian army; Liege and Aix-la-Chapelle were occupied; Brussels had been evacuated; Flanders was lost; General Maison was rapidly falling back to the old frontiers of the monarchy; while the unresisted march of Blücher to Châlons, which he had occupied on the 5th, clearly indicated a resolution to advance on Paris by the route by which it was most assailable, and where scarcely any force existed to arrest his progress. The troops, profoundly affected at having so long to retire before the enemy, were now deserting by crowds; the sides of the road were covered with arms, cloaks, and haversacks, thrown down in despair; twelve thousand conscripts had left their standards since the battle of La Rothière, making the total loss since hostilities recommenced not less than twenty thousand: and the despatches from Caulaincourt, who was engaged in the conferences which had been opened at Chatillon, announced that the demands of the allied sovereigns, rising with the successes of their arms, were no longer limited, as at Frankfort, to the recognition of the frontier of the Rhine, but pointed to the reduction of France within the ancient limits of the monarchy.

36. Such was the magnitude of the losses which the French army had sustained since the opening of the campaign, especially in cavalry, that a fresh organisation of that arm, to conceal the frightful chasms in its ranks, had become necessary. It took place

at Nogent, and continued unchanged till the conclusion of the war. The cavalry had previously been divided into six corps; but such had been the enormous amount of its losses, that, even with the aid of successive reinforcements, sent from the depots in the interior, it could only now make out four, of which two were composed of only three divisions each. Grouchy obtained the general command of the whole, and the corps under him were intrusted to Count Bordesoult, Count St Germain, Count Milhaud, and Kellerman, now created Count de Valmy. In addition to this, there was the cavalry of the Guard, consisting of five divisions, under Laferrière, Lefebvre-Desnouettes, Colbert, Guyot, and De France; and such was the activity displayed in pushing reinforcements into this service, that it soon numbered in its ranks fifteen thousand admirable horsemen. The skeleton of a new corps of infantry was also formed, under Oudinot, on the Seine below Nogent, and at Bray, composed of the divisions Leval and Boyer de Rebeval, which were now coming up from the army of the Pyrenees, and of various bodies of conscripts hurried forward from the depots in the interior.

37. It was in these disastrous and all but desperate circumstances, that Napoleon conceived and executed one of those hardy, yet prudent measures, which have justly rendered his name immortal. Rightly judging that he need not disquiet himself about the Austrians—whose slow and methodical movements, ever kept subordinate to the mysteries of diplomacy, were now more than ever circumspect, from the peculiar position of their emperor making war on his own son-in-law—he cast his eyes on Blücher, whose bolder movements, since the separation of the armies, were both more fitted to excite solicitude and afford opportunity. The progress of the Prussian marshal, since he had been left at liberty to act for himself, had been so rapid as to have excited the most lively apprehensions in the breasts of the Parisians. Hardly an hour elapsed that the most alarming intelligence was not

received from the seat of government. The Russians and Prussians, with their ardent chief at their head, were advancing by forced marches towards the capital, and driving before them a confused and trembling crowd of peasants, women, and children, who fled at the approach of these northern barbarians. In this extremity, with disaster pressing him on every side, and the enemy's advanced posts within a few marches of the capital, Maret and all his councillors earnestly besought the Emperor to accept even the rigorous conditions proposed by the Allies, and make peace. But after a night passed in reflection, he replied, "No, no! we must think of other things just now. I am on the eve of destroying Blücher. He is advancing on the road to Montmirail. I am about to set off. I shall beat him to-morrow—I shall beat him the day after to-morrow: if that movement is attended with the success it deserves, the face of affairs will be entirely changed, and then we shall see what is to be done."

38. The positions occupied by the army of Silesia, in all fifty-six thousand strong, at this juncture, were singularly favourable to such an enterprise. Blücher, with the corps of Sacken and Olsooß, which had fought at La Rothière, had, in obedience to the instructions he had received, moved on the 3d through St Ouen on the road to Chalons. Meanwhile York attacked the latter town, which was garrisoned by a detachment of Macdonald's corps, and after a sharp conflict made himself master of it. That brave marshal, who was encumbered with the grand park of Napoleon's army, consisting of a hundred guns dragged by peasants' horses, upon this retired to Epernay, towards Paris; and Blücher no sooner heard of the direction of his march, than he resolved to cut him off, and for this purpose directed his troops to La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, where the two great roads from Chalons to Paris meet. The better to compass this design, which seemed to promise entire success, he ordered York to follow the

French marshal by the highway through Epernay and Chateau-Thierry; Sacken was directed through Bergères on MONTMIRAIL; and he was to be followed at the distance of a day's march by Olsooß, who was commanded to remain at CHAMPAUBERT till further orders. The field-marshal himself halted at Vertus, almost without troops, to await the coming up of Kleist's corps, which was hourly expected at Chalons. With the three corps united, he proposed to fall on Macdonald's troops, and having destroyed them and taken the convoy of guns, push direct on the capital, where the utmost consternation already prevailed. Sacken's advanced guard had reached La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, and the crowd of fugitives was pouring in wild disorder into Meaux. Already the litters of the wounded, and the disbanded conscripts, were beginning to be seen in Paris, where the public streets were almost deserted in the apprehension of an impending calamity. No uneasiness filled the field-marshal's breast, during this rapid advance, for the security of his left flank, though Napoleon lay in that direction, as he deemed him sufficiently occupied with watching the motions of the Grand Army; as Nogent, where the headquarters of the French were established, was thirty miles distant; and as the only approach to it was through deep cross-roads, by the marshy bank of the Petit Morin, apparently impassable at that inclement season of the year.

39. Having taken his resolution, the Emperor instantly gave orders for carrying it into execution; and leaving Victor at Nogent with fourteen thousand men, to keep the Austrians in check, and Oudinot at Bray-sur-Seine at the head of ten thousand, with orders to delay them as long as possible at the passage of that river, he resolved himself to set out with the *élite* of his army, about forty-five thousand strong, for Sézanne, with the intention of falling perpendicularly on the line of Blücher's march, and destroying his scattered columns. He announced this design the same evening to Joseph at Paris, in a letter which

fully explains his military designs at this period, and reveals the great strategist in full lustre.* On the 9th he broke up with this design from Nogent, and slept at Sézanne, half-way across, with the Imperial Guard, and on the following day moved on towards Champaubert. But the obstacles to the passage proved greater even than had been anticipated, and it required all the vigour and authority of the Emperor to overcome the insubordination of his troops, and conquer the difficulties of the enterprise. The spirits of the soldiers, already severely depressed when they arrived at Nogent, were sunk to the lowest degree by the hardships and difficulties of this cross-march, for which no object was apparent, and which seemed to have been undertaken for no other purpose but to leave open to the Austrian Grand Army the road to the capital. Murmurs were universal; insubordination bordered on mutiny; it was openly said, both by officers and men, that the Emperor had lost his head, and that he was fast hurrying the empire to destruction.

* "I start to-morrow for Sézanne, and I hope to-morrow to attack the army of Silesia. Sacken is at Montmirail with 15,000 men. I debouch upon him by Sézanne and Champaubert. If this operation prove entirely successful it may decide the campaign. If I succeed in two or three days in crushing the army of Silesia, I will debouch upon Nogent or Montereau. With your reserves I will have 80,000 men, and may give affairs an unexpected turn. My army is divided into three corps. On the right, the Duke of Reggio (Oudinot) has 25,000 men; in the centre, the Duke of Belluno (Victor) has 14,000; with myself I have 30,000 men: forming in all a force of 60,000 or 70,000 men, including the engineers and artillery. I calculate on having to deal with 45,000 men of the army of Silesia and 15,000 of Schwartzberg's, including Bubna and the Cossacks. So that, if I beat the army of Silesia, and put it for some days *hors de combat*, I will be able to turn upon Schwartzberg with 60,000 or 70,000 men, including the reinforcements that you will send me from Paris; and I do not think he will be able to oppose to me more than 110,000 or 120,000 men. If I do not find myself strong enough to attack him, at least I will be able to keep him in check for fifteen or twenty days; and this will make room for new combinations. As I will to-morrow attack the enemy in rear, there need be no alarm, should he push forward for La Ferté or Meaux."—*NAPOLÉON to JOSEPH, Nogent, 9th Feb. 1814. BIGNON, xiii. 238, 239.*

40. Marmont, who led the advance with his corps, found the roads so dreadful, that the artillery-drivers reported it impossible to get the guns through. In effect, notwithstanding all the efforts of the officers, the cannon and waggons stuck fast in the deep clay forest of Traponne, and Marmont, despairing of success, was re-measuring his steps. When this was reported to the Emperor, he replied, "You must still advance, even if you leave the whole cannon behind you." The marshal was instantly ordered to face about and resume his march, and push through at all hazards. Couriers were despatched in all directions to the mayors of the adjacent communes to procure horses, to aid in extricating the artillery; and such was the patriotic ardour with which the assistance was furnished, that the guns and caissons were at length got through. The disorders and discouragement of the troops, however, had now reached their acme from this accumulation of difficulties; pillage became universal, from the total want of any magazines for the supply of the troops, and, being exercised without mercy on the people of the country, gave rise to the most violent exasperation. The Emperor, after long shutting his eyes to these excesses, had at length his attention forcibly drawn to them by the destruction of a chateau, in the neighbourhood of Nogent, belonging to his own mother. Justly incensed, he issued a severe proclamation, in which he declared he would hold the generals and officers responsible for the conduct of their troops;† but the evil still continued with very little abatement, and, by preventing any cordial assistance from the peasantry to the soldiers, was one cause of the fall of Napoleon. It rose

† "The Emperor has to express to the army his displeasure at the excesses to which it abandons itself. Such disorders are always hurtful: but they become criminal when committed in our native country. From this day forward, the chiefs of corps and the generals shall be held entirely responsible for them. The inhabitants are flying on every side, and the troops, instead of being their country's defenders, are becoming its scourge."—*Proclamation, 8th Feb. 1814; DANILEFSKY, 96.*

from a deeper source than any regulation of discipline could rectify—the habits of systematic extortion to which the armies of the Revolution had been trained; and the want of any magazines to supply them without individual marauding; and was, in fact, the reaction of Napoleon's *favouritemaxim*, that war should maintain war, upon himself and his own subjects.

41. Early on the morning of the 10th, Marmont approached the defiles of St Gond under the eyes of the Emperor, directing his march against the village of Baye, which was occupied by a detachment of Olsoofief's corps. That general, with his gallant Russians, was lying at Champaubert in perfect security, and dreaming of nothing less than being assailed on his left flank; in which direction, from the position of Schwartzenberg's army, and the difficult nature of the intervening country, there seemed no ground for apprehending danger. Meanwhile Marmont reached the summit of the height which overlooks the valley of the Petit Morin, and beheld the Russians, about five thousand strong, with twenty-four guns, busy in preparing their breakfasts, wholly unconscious of their approaching peril. Napoleon immediately rode up to the front, and, overjoyed at the success of his movement, ordered a general attack. The Russian general, though astonished beyond measure at this unexpected apparition on his flank, drew up his men with great steadiness to resist. Some prisoners, however, taken in the skirmish near Baye, having mentioned that the Emperor was with the troops, he despatched repeated couriers to Blücher to demand assistance, and know whether he should retreat. But the field-marshal directed him to maintain himself where he was, and that succour was unnecessary, as it was impossible that he could be assailed by more than a flying detachment of two thousand men. Thus left to his own resources, the brave Russian, though well aware he had to deal with an overwhelming force, led on by the Emperor himself, prepared, like a good soldier, to maintain his post to the last extremity.

42. Napoleon, seeing that the enemy stood firm, made dispositions for attacking them at once in front and both flanks. Lagrange with his division, followed by that of Ricard, crossed the marshes of St Gond, carried the bridge of St Prix, and drove the Russian advanced posts through the village of Baye, into Champaubert, where they rallied, under protection of their main body and artillery, which opened a most vigorous fire. Meanwhile, the French cavalry at a greater distance passed the marsh, and having gained the high-road leading from Champaubert to Montmirail, turned and attacked the Russians on their right flank, while Lagrange's division, menaced their left. Despairing of maintaining his position against such an accumulation of enemies, Olsoofief sent half his guns to the rear, and, forming his men in column, marched in person to force the passage towards Etoges and Chalons, while Poltoratsky, with a brigade, was left to defend Champaubert to the last extremity. This little band defended themselves with desperate resolution till their ammunition began to fail, when they were obliged to retreat out of the village and retire across a plain, with the view of reaching the shelter of a wood at a little distance. As he drew near to this cover, Poltoratsky perceived that it was already in the hands of the enemy; and he was received by them with a volley of musketry. At the same time, the horse-artillery of the French made fearful chasms in the Russian ranks; their cavalry charged in at the openings; and the wearied square dragged its toilsome way along, moistening every step with its blood. At length, having exhausted its last cartridge, the whole of this devoted band was overpowered and made prisoners. Olsoofief himself, finding the road to Etoges occupied by the French with superior forces, struck off to the left, and endeavoured to make his way across the fields towards Pont-à-Binson; but his guns stuck fast in the deep mud, so that the enemy had time to surround the detachment, which, having wholly exhausted its ammunition, was in great part made

prisoners, with the commander himself. General Cornelloff, however, with General Udom, disdained even in this extremity to surrender; but collecting the remains of the corps, about two thousand strong, with twelve guns, they succeeded in breaking through the enemy, and at midnight reached Pont-à-Binson with their colours and honour unsullied.

43. In this disastrous affair the Russians lost three thousand men, killed, wounded, and prisoners, besides twelve guns and seventeen caissons, while the French were only weakened by six hundred men. The moral effect of the triumph was still more considerable; and it was such that it well-nigh neutralised the whole effect of the previous successes, and rendered problematical the final result of the invasion. The French troops, who had been reduced to the lowest point of depression by the long-continued retreat, were elevated beyond measure by this brilliant success, which, achieved with so little loss, seemed to recall, in the midst of disaster, the brilliant days of Arcola and Rivoli. By this daring and felicitous cross-march, the initiative had been regained by the French Emperor; he had achieved the greatest feat in strategy—that, with a force inferior upon the whole to his adversaries, of being greatly superior at the point of attack; he had broken in upon the line of advance of the army of Silesia, and could at pleasure turn with a concentrated array upon any of its scattered columns. The French soldiers, intelligent beyond any other in Europe, immediately perceived the immense advantages which this brilliant cross-march had secured for them; the depression of the retreat, the disaster of La Rothière, the fatigues of the preceding days, were forgotten. Napoleon no longer appeared the insane ruler, hurrying blindfold to destruction, but the consummate commander, who prepared amidst adversity the means of regaining prosperous fortune; and that general confidence was felt which, more than either numbers or experience, frequently contributes to military success.

44. Napoleon felt the whole impulse

of the returning tide of victory, which had now set in to his arms. Poltoratsky, the Russian general, who had been made prisoner, having been brought before him, he exclaimed, "I now tell you, that as I have routed you to-day, I shall annihilate Sacken to-morrow; on Thursday, the whole of Wittgenstein's advanced guard will be disposed of; on Friday, I shall give Blucher a blow from which he will never recover, and I then hope to dictate peace to Alexander on the Vistula. Your old fox Kutusoff deceived me by his march on our flank: the burning of Moscow was a barbarous act—it was the work of the Russians. I took Berlin, Madrid, and Vienna, and no such thing happened." "The Russians," replied Poltoratsky, "do not repent of that sacrifice, and are delighted with its results." "Leave the room, sir!" replied the Emperor, stamping with his foot. On that very night he despatched orders to his plenipotentiary Caulaincourt, at the congress which was sitting, to gain time and *sign nothing*, as he was on the eve of the most important events. Next morning he announced his success to Macdonald, with orders to him to discontinue his retreat; and himself set off by daybreak to attack Sacken at Montmirail, leaving the corps of Marmont before Etoges to watch Blucher, who lay at Vertus, anxiously awaiting the arrival of Kleist's corps to enable him to resume the offensive. By this blow, Napoleon had cut the Silesian army into two parts, and interposed with fifty thousand men, to which his own army was now augmented, between its severed wings.

45. Sacken's situation was now very critical. He had received an order from Blucher, late the night before, to remeasure his steps through Montmirail toward the plains of Vertus; and the field-marshal had ordered York to join him. But the rapidity of the Emperor's movements anticipated the execution of either of these orders. At the very time that Napoleon moved from Champaubert to Montmirail, Sacken was on his way to it, marching back from La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, which he had reached on his advance towards

Paris; but the French were beforehand with him, and Montmirail was occupied by their advanced guard before the Russians approached it. Thus anticipated, and intercepted in his attempted movement to rejoin his commander-in-chief, the Russian general had no alternative but to prepare for combat. This he did the more willingly, as he relied on the approach and co-operation of York, who was near Chateau-Thierry, and who, he was aware, had received orders to join him without loss of time. Trusting with too great confidence to this assistance, Sacken, instead of inclining to his left, as he might have done, to facilitate his junction with York, resolved to push straight on, and endeavour to force his passage through the opposing columns, by the valley of the Petit Morin. He formed his troops, in consequence, in order of battle; the centre, on the great road from La Ferté-sous-Jouarre to Montmirail; the right, on the village of Marchais, near the Petit Morin stream; and the left in the open ground towards the village of Fontenelle, where it was hoped they would speedily be joined by York's corps, coming up from Chateau-Thierry.

46. As the French troops came up to Montmirail, they marched out of the town, and, forming on the opposite side, commenced the attack upon the Russians. The fire began at eleven o'clock, and soon became extremely warm on both sides. Forty pieces of cannon, arrayed along the allied front, long kept the French at bay; and the village of Marchais, where Scherbatoff's infantry was posted, on the Russian right, was three times taken and retaken at the point of the bayonet. Meanwhile York himself arrived, but reported that his troops could not appear on the ground till three o'clock, and that his whole artillery had been left at Chateau-Thierry, from the experienced impossibility of dragging it forward in the wretched state of the roads. At the very time that this depressing intelligence was received by the Allies, Mortier came up with the Old Guard, the cuirassiers, and the

Guards of Honour,* to the aid of the French; and Napoleon, having now got his reserves in hand, and seeing the decisive moment arrived, ordered a general attack on the whole of Sacken's line, but taking care to direct the weight of his force against the Russian left near Fontenelle, in order to throw it back on the centre, and cut off the enemy from the line of their junction with York, or approach to Blucher.

47. If the attack was vigorous, however, the defence was not less obstinate. Ranged behind hedges and in farm offices, the Russian tirailleurs long retarded the advance of the enemy; and when at length they were forced back, the mutual fury of the combatants brought them, with loud cries on both sides, to the decisive shock of the bayonet. Success was varied in this dreadful encounter—in some places the French were forced back, in others they penetrated the Russian line; but at this decisive moment Napoleon ordered up the cuirassiers and Guards of Honour to charge the half-broken masses of the enemy. As these gallant cavaliers defiled past the Emperor, he said to them, "Brave young men! there is the enemy! Will you allow him to march to Paris?"—"We will not allow him!" exclaimed the horsemen, shaking their sabres aloft, and rending the air with their cries; and instantly breaking into a charge, fell upon the enemy with such fury that the victory in that quarter was speedily decided. In vain York now came up with several brigades of Prussians, though without artillery, which could not be dragged through the deep clay to Fontenelle and Les Tourneux; they, too, were broken by the French cavalry, and shared the general ruin. Ney and Mortier carried the farm of Grenots amidst vehement cheers, and drove the Russian left back upon the centre, which, with the right, retired across

* A new corps of cavalry, dressed in dark-green hussar uniform, recently raised by Napoleon, composed of the young men of the first families in the country, who were equipped and mounted at their own expense: and, by being so, escaped the conscription.

the fields towards Chateau-Thierry, covered by Wassilchikoff's dragoons, which, with the utmost gallantry, repulsed the repeated charges of the French cuirassiers.

48. In this bloody combat, the Allies lost three thousand men killed and wounded, and a thousand prisoners, besides nine guns, which stuck fast in the mud, and could not be drawn off when the corps retreated. The French loss did not exceed one thousand. It was only by the utmost exertions, and harnessing fifty hussars and hulans with long ropes to each gun, that the remainder were got away during the darkness and confusion, while torches were displayed every hundred yards to illuminate the gloom. Napoleon passed the night at the farmhouse of Grenots, sleeping on the straw, in the midst of smoking ruins from which the enemy's dead had just been removed; and next morning by day-break he was on horseback, at the head of his Guards, to pursue the Allies. The Prussian general, Horn, was stationed to keep the enemy in check with twenty-four squadrons, which had not hitherto suffered in the conflict. He arranged these troops in two lines, the first of which charged the enemy. They were received, however, with such vigour by Ney, at the head of the French dragoons, that the first line was at once routed and driven back upon the second, which was also thrown into confusion, and fled. Immediately the French cavalry pushed on, and swept round the squares of Russian infantry, which had barely time to form in rear of the horse; two of them were broken in the tumult, and three pieces of cannon taken, besides a thousand prisoners. Meanwhile, however, the main body of the Russians and Prussians succeeded in crossing the Marne at Chateau-Thierry, and breaking down its bridges, which prevented the further pursuit of the enemy, and placed them, for the time at least, in a situation of security. But in this day's combat they had lost two thousand more of their best soldiers, besides several guns abandoned in the retreat; making their total loss in the

two days, seventeen guns, five standards, and six thousand men.

49. By directing his course to the left, and marching on the first day straight to Chateau-Thierry, without seeking to encounter Napoleon at all, there can be no doubt that Sacken might have avoided this serious disaster, and joined Blucher with his forces untouched. But his orders from the field-marshal were precise, to march to join him by Montmirail; and, like a good soldier, he obeyed his instructions, though to the evident danger of himself and his troops. Well, therefore, did he merit the encomium of the biographer of Blucher—"Sacken may have committed an error of judgment on this occasion, but it was the error of a hero too confident of his own strength: we had few generals equal to him; only such as he might hope to vanquish Napoleon." But disaster was now accumulating on the army of Silesia on every side. While the Emperor in person was gaining these splendid successes against the corps of Olsooief and Sacken, Blucher remained at Vertus, with hardly any troops at his disposal, anxiously awaiting the arrival of Kleist's and Kaptsevich's corps. It may be conceived with what impatience the impetuous veteran remained in this state of forced inaction, when fresh accounts of Napoleon's successes were every hour received; when the fugitives from Champaubert were coming straggling in, and the distant roar of the cannon at Montmirail announced Sacken's danger. But, notwithstanding his ardent desire to join his comrades, and, if he could not avert their calamities, to share their fate, he was unable to move a single step in advance, from his total want of cavalry, and the presence of Marmont with a corps of fifteen thousand men, which report had magnified to thirty thousand, at Etoges, directly between him and his lieutenants.

50. At length, however, Kleist and Kaptsevich having arrived, and the remains of Olsooief's corps and two regiments of cuirassiers having joined, he advanced at the head of twenty

thousand combatants to Etoges, which Marmont evacuated at his approach, retiring towards Chateau-Thierry, where Napoleon lay with the main body of his forces. An interesting scene had occurred in that town on the preceding day. The inhabitants, on the night of the action in front of the town, after the combat of Montmirail, had been overwhelmed by a mass of fugitives in disorder, who vented their rage and vexation at their defeat by every species of pillage and rapine, which all the efforts of the Russian and Prussian officers had been unable to restrain. Proportionally vivid was their joy on the following morning, when the town was evacuated by the enemy; and the indignant inhabitants, yet smarting under the brutality to which they had been subjected, went out in crowds along the banks of the Marne to meet their deliverers. Men, women, and children, laboured assiduously to restore the bridges which the Russians had destroyed in their retreat, and to reconstruct a passage to their own soldiers. And when at length the boats were collected, the planks laid, and the troops began to defile across, loud shouts rent the air, and a confused multitude of all ages and both sexes, rushing forward, embraced with tears of joy the gallant warriors whose valour had delivered them from their oppressors.

51. Napoleon was no sooner informed of the advance of Blücher to Etoges, and thence towards Montmirail, than he set out from Chateau-Thierry on the evening of the 13th with his Guards and the greater part of his forces, and arrived at the latter town at eight on the morning of the 14th. Marmont had just evacuated, after considerable fighting, the village of VAUCHAMPS, and was retreating along the road to Montmirail, when the well-known ensigns of the Guard were seen on the highway, and a powerful body of cuirassiers announced the presence of the Emperor. Instantaneous was the effect of this intelligence upon the spirit of the troops: it seemed as if the wand of a mighty enchanter had

given an electric shock to every soldier on the field. Immediately the retreat was suspended; the cavalry, hurrying to the front, charged with boldness and rapidity; the skirmishers fell back, and gave place to deep columns of infantry, boldly advancing to the attack; the batteries were reinforced, and fired with increased vivacity; aides-de-camp were seen galloping in all directions; and the air resounded with cries of *Vive l'Empereur!* It was now the Prussian general's turn to halt, and make his dispositions for defence. Ziethen, who headed the vanguard, was soon forced back in disorder upon the main body, which had barely time to form square when a numerous body of cavalry assailed it. The German cuirassiers were speedily overthrown, and the line of horsemen, headed by Grouchy, swept round the squares on two sides: one was broken and most of the men made prisoners, but the others received them with a sustained rolling fire, and the charge was repulsed. As the increasing numbers, however, and augmented boldness of the enemy, left no doubt of the presence of the Emperor with an overwhelming superiority of force, Blücher felt the necessity of retiring, and commenced his retreat in squares, the artillery being placed in the intervals, with Kleist on the right and Kaptsevich on the left.

52. And now commenced a combat, which has shed as immortal a lustre on the steadiness of the Russian and Prussian troops, as the previous brilliant successes had secured for the French Emperor and his army. The retreat was conducted along the high-road, which traverses a flat and open country, running in a straight line, as is usual in that part of France, between rows of lofty elms. On this *chaussée* the artillery retired, firing incessantly as it receded on the pursuers, while the squares of infantry marched abreast of it in the fields on either side. Slowly, and in perfect order, the allied squares fell back without either hurry or disorder, as on a field-day at St Petersburg, and then appeared in their highest lustre the mar-

vels of military discipline. In vain the French cuirassiers, with devoted gallantry, and animated by the presence of the Emperor, swept round the steady walls of steel, and, approaching to the very edge of the bayonets, strove to force their way in, wherever the discharge of the cannon tore a chasm, or the fall of the wounded presented an opening. Instantly closing up, these noble veterans still preserved their array unbroken; and the squares, though sorely diminished, and leaving a stream of blood, flowing from the dead and the wounded, along their path, still presented an undaunted front to the enemy. Entranced with the spectacle, Blücher, forgetting his own danger, gazed on the scene, and, halting his horse, exclaimed, "See how my brave Russians fight!" Thus combating, they reached Champaubert. But, after passing through that town, the danger thickened; and such were the perils with which they were beset, that the bravest almost gave themselves up to despair.

53. While the Russian troops were delayed by defiling through the narrow causeway of Champaubert, Napoleon, who had a body of seven thousand admirable horse at his command, had despatched Grouchy at the head of three thousand of the swiftest among them, by a circuit round the village; and by great exertions that indefatigable officer had so far outstripped the slower march of the allied column, encumbered as it was by artillery and caissons, that he had gained the high-road two miles in advance, and was established in force on it before the Allies had extricated themselves from the houses. Meanwhile Generals Bordesoult and St Germain closely followed the rear of the retreating column; and, turning it on both flanks as it emerged into the meadows on the other side of the town, charged repeatedly, though without success, on three faces at once, the now wearied and almost exhausted body. By a continued fire of cannon and musketry, the Allies succeeded in clearing the way through their

constantly increasing enemies; and they had got to within half a mile of Etoges, where the danger would cease from the country being no longer practicable for cavalry, when all at once, on surmounting an eminence, they beheld Grouchy's horsemen drawn up in battle-array before them, just as the sun set; and his last rays glanced on the long line of cuirasses which, stretching far across the road on either side, seemed to present an impassable barrier to their further advance. At this appalling sight, the boldest in the allied ranks held his breath; total defeat appeared to be inevitable; the mighty heart of Blücher shuddered at the thought, that not himself only, but the whole corps, with Prince Augustus of Prussia, were on the point of being made prisoners. "Let us die rather!" said that gallant prince, drawing his sword, and preparing to charge headlong upon the enemy. With mournful resolution Blücher stood in the front of the squares, in hopes of falling before he witnessed the disgrace of his country. "If you should be killed here," said his aide-de-camp Nostitz, "do you really think history will praise you for it?" Struck with these words, the field-marshal turned his horse's head, and said to Gneisenau—"If I do not perish to-day, then am I destined to live long, and I still hope to repair all."

54. That there was no hope, except in forcing their way through with the bayonet, was evident to all, from the commander-in-chief to the meanest private; and worthy indeed of a hero were the means which Blücher took to effect it. He commanded the drums to beat, the colours to be displayed, and, "with all the pomp and circumstance" of war, the troops to bear down in a solid mass upon the enemy. Cheered by the martial sound, fresh vigour was inspired into the soldiers' breasts; the artillery and infantry opened such a fire in front, that the chaussée was cleared, and the weighty column, preceded by its guns, marched into the forest of sabres. Had the horse-artillery, which Grouchy had

ordered to follow him, been able to keep pace with the cavalry, the mass would probably have been broken, and the whole body, with the commander-in-chief, have been made prisoners. But it had stuck fast in the mud: the cavalry alone, without infantry or guns, was unable to withstand the shock, and the main body got through, with the commander-in-chief, Prince Augustus, and their whole staff. Enraged, however, at seeing their prey thus escaping them, Grouchy's horsemen closed on either side with such fury on the last squares, which had exhausted their ammunition, that several were broken, two Russian battalions were cut to pieces, and two Prussian regiments compelled to surrender. The Russian horse-artillery were in the most imminent danger; but their commander, Colonel Shusherin, formed the cannoneers in line, and, headed by Blücher, charged, sword in hand, right through the French cavalry, and got clear off.

55. At length the wearied and bleeding column reached Etoges, where it was hoped rest and safety would be found; but there fresh combats awaited it. At ten at night, after it was quite dark, Marmont, at the head of his corps, which was comparatively fresh, suddenly commenced an attack on General Udom's brigade, which was reposing near the entrance of the town, broke it during the confusion of a nocturnal combat, and took several guns. Following up his success, the French marshal pushed on amidst frightful confusion, and a second time the Allies found the line of their retreat to Bergères interrupted. But despair gave them almost supernatural strength. Firing and manœuvring were out of the question. In deep masses, and with loud hurrahs, they rushed upon the enemy, trampled them under foot, and marching over their bodies, arrived at midnight at Bergères. The pursuit was now at an end: order was in some degree restored to the regiments; and, after a few hours' rest, the retreat was continued to Chalons, where the remains of this once splendid array arrived on the

evening of the 15th, and at length found repose under cover of the Marne.

56. In this terrible combat, Blücher, whose force at the commencement of the action did not exceed twenty thousand soldiers, lost six thousand men killed, wounded, and prisoners, or nearly a third of the troops engaged, fifteen guns, and eight standards. The prisoners, in number about two thousand five hundred, were almost entirely Prussians; for though several Russian squares were pierced through, and dreadful loss was sustained by them under the French sabres, hardly a man was taken; the Muscovites sternly combating to the very last, even when their ranks were broken, and further resistance in a military point of view was unavailing. The French loss did not exceed twelve hundred men. After the battle the remains of the army of Silesia converged together from Chalons and Chateau-Thierry, behind the shelter of the Marne, and collected their shattered bands in cantonments on the north-east of that river, but weakened by the loss of fully twenty thousand men since Napoleon's fatal irruption had commenced, six days before, from the side of Sézanne.

57. The night after the battle of Vauchamps, Napoleon returned to Montmirail, where he slept; and, deeming nothing done while anything remained to do, instead of giving repose to his wearied troops, which had now marched and fought for six days incessantly, he sent advices to Victor and Oudinot, that he would debouch on the following day in the valley of the Seine in their rear, by Guignes. The extreme badness of the cross roads, from the valley of the Marne to that of the Seine, having rendered this impossible by the direct line, he left his other troops in the neighbourhood of Chateau-Thierry and Montmirail, to watch the broken remains of the army of Silesia; and he himself, with his faithful Guards and cuirassiers, whom nothing could exhaust, took the route of Meaux, from whence on the following morning he turned to the left, and moved on Guignes,

through the forest of Brie, by the chaussée of Fontenay. Meanwhile all Paris was thrown into transports of joy by the arrival of successive couriers, who brought intelligence of the victories of Champaubert, Montmirail, and Vauchamps. The bulletins, which exaggerated these glorious successes, diffused a universal enchantment: the genius of the Emperor seemed to have restored the days of Arcole and Rivoli; while a long column of seven thousand prisoners, taken in these combats, who were conducted along the Boulevards, preceded by military music and almost triumphal pomp, gave confirmation strong of the reality of the Emperor's achievements.

58. While these memorable events were in progress on the banks of the Marne, events, attended in the end with still more important consequences, were taking place on the banks of the Seine. The allied sovereigns had made their entry into Troyes on the 7th of February without resistance, a few hours after Napoleon with his troops had left it. Although the ancient capital of Champagne had much declined, under the government of Napoleon, from its former splendour, when it had forty thousand souls within its walls, while it could not now boast of above twenty thousand inhabitants; yet its occupation was of the highest importance, both as regarded the physical necessities and moral influence of the allied arms. Not only had the town itself considerable resources, especially for the sick and wounded, whose number was now very large in their army, but, being the centre where all the roads and communications of the province met, or intersected each other, it afforded the most valuable facilities for the procuring of provisions, which the concourse of such prodigious bodies of men and horses had now rendered a matter of very considerable difficulty, even in the heart of France. While the advanced guard of this army, consisting chiefly of the Würtembergers and Bavarians under Wrede, defiled along the road to Paris on the traces of Napoleon, the bulk of it, which was now con-

centrated, continued passing through the town for twelve hours together, exhibiting a stupendous proof of the strength of the allied forces; for at the end of that time, independent of two corps which were pursuing the French, a hundred thousand men were encamped around the walls of Troyes.

59. But the entrance of the allied armies into this city was followed by a political movement of still higher importance, and which, in the end, exercised a most decisive influence on the fortunes of the Revolution, and the ultimate fate of Napoleon. It was here that the first movement in favour of the RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS took place.

Twenty-one years had now elapsed since the blood of Louis XVI. had flowed on the Place Louis XV., and England, amidst the storm of indignation excited by his fate, had been drawn unwillingly into the contest. Such had been the whirl of events which had immediately succeeded, and such the pressing interest of the glories and catastrophes which had since occurred, that the recollection of that illustrious race had almost been lost in France, and their name had nearly disappeared from the page of European history. The ancient loyalty of the monarchy, indeed, still burned in the bosoms of a few highly-descended nobles in other parts of the empire, and in many generous breasts among all classes in La Vendée; and the clergy in great part still nursed in secret a predilection for the ancient race, as for the ancient faith. But the young and active part of the population, almost all who could influence thought or determine action, had been whirled, willingly or unwillingly, into the vortex of the Revolution. An entire generation of the ancient nobles had expired under the guillotine, perished amidst the horrors of the revolutionary prisons, or melted away, amidst poverty and oblivion, in foreign lands. Warm as had been the sympathy, generous the hospitality, with which the emigrants had been at first received in every part of Eu-

rope, and especially in England, the rapidity of subsequent events, the intensity of subsequent interests, had been such that they were now in a great measure forgotten.

60. Numbers of them had taken advantage of the amnesty of Napoleon to return to their beloved country: not a few had yielded to the seductions of his antechambers, and settled down in the Tuileries under the imperial, as they had done under the royal regime. Above all, the total destruction of their properties had deprived them of almost all influence both at home and abroad; for although the sufferings of those who had been the victims of spoliation may at first excite a warm feeling of indignation, yet it insensibly gives way in process of time to the experienced inconvenience of relieving their necessities. It is rare to see a feeling of pity which can long survive repeated demands for money. The general irreligion and consequent selfishness of all the more elevated or influential classes in France, both before and since the Revolution, had deprived the cause of ancient loyalty of its only source of lasting support—a sense of duty springing from obligations superior to this world. Thus, though there were still many Royalists, especially in the provincial towns of France, they were wholly powerless as a political party. They were regarded by the active and energetic portion of the people, rather as a respectable relic of the olden time, than as a body which could ever again rise to power in the state; and it may safely be affirmed, that without external aid the cause of the Restoration was hopeless in France, unless possibly from the sufferings produced by a long course of disastrous revolutions.

61. Notwithstanding all this, however, a certain organisation in favour of the exiled family had throughout all the Revolution existed in the country, and it had recently acquired greater vigour and efficiency from the unexampled disasters which seemed to threaten the imperial dynasty with ruin. The principal ramifications of

this quiescent conspiracy, as might naturally have been expected, were to be found in La Vendée, Brittany, and the south of France; but it was not without its leaders and adherents in the capital. There, some of the principal partisans of the Revolution, true to the polar star of worldly ambition, were anxiously watching the progress of events; and, without as yet engaging in any overt act against the reigning dynasty, were secretly preparing to abandon their principles and their benefactor, and range themselves on the side of whatever party might appear likely to gain the ascendancy in the crisis which was approaching. The vast fabric of Napoleon's power, based on the selfish passions, and strengthened by worldly success, was already beginning to break up, even in its centre, on the approach of adversity. But, independent of these discreditable though powerful allies, a noble band of elevated and generous spirits, alike untainted by the crimes and unseduced by the allurements of the Revolution, were bound together by the secret tie of fidelity to misfortune. Their number, indeed, as might be expected in a selfish and irreligious age, was small; but their courage was great, their constancy respectable, and their power in a crisis might be expected to be far beyond what their physical strength or political influence would have prognosticated.

62. The proceedings of the Royalist association at Bordeaux were under the direction of M. Taffard de St Germain, and included the heads of many of the noblest families in the south and west of France, especially the Duke de Duras, M. Adrien de Montmorency, M. de la Rochejaquelein, and M. de la Ville de Beaugé; while the committee in Paris embraced the Dukes de Fitzjames and de la Tremouille, M. Polignac, and M. Sothène de la Rochefoucault. Though this Royalist confederacy subsisted in secret throughout all the changes of the Revolution, the Consulate, and the Empire, yet its proceedings had never assumed an active character, till the misfortunes of Napoleon, and the retreat of the imperial

armies across the Rhine, afforded a prospect of a speedy political revolution. Then active conferences commenced in profound secrecy at the Chateau d'Usse in Touraine, a seat of the Duke de Duras; while the Duke de Fitzjames, and other leaders at Paris, entered the National Guard of that capital, which the Emperor had recently called out, to be in a situation to take advantage of any crisis that might be approaching.

63. While the Royalist party, during the long and dreary years of revolutionary ascendancy, were thus in silence adhering to their principles, and waiting the return of more prosperous fortune, the exiled prince, afterwards Louis XVIII., retired from one place of asylum to another as the French power advanced, till at length he was entirely driven from the continent of Europe, and forced to take refuge on the British shores. He had, in the first instance, after dwelling a few months at Hamm, established himself with his court of emigrants at Verona, where he assumed the title of regent of France; and his proceedings were mainly under the direction of a zealous and indefatigable Royalist, the Count d'Antraigues. Meanwhile the Count d'Artois was at St Petersburg, where his credit was so high with the Empress Catharine, that the regency was recognised, and he received a splendid sword from her, with the hope "that it might open to him the gates of France, as it had done to his ancestor Henry IV." The Count d'Artois, however, was a generous man, but not a soldier or the leader of an army; he showed so little zeal in the cause, that a project, which at one period had been agitated, of intrusting to him the command of thirty thousand Russians, to act on the coast of La Vendée, was abandoned; and he returned to London, where he sold the sword for four thousand pounds, and distributed the price among the most necessitous of his companions in misfortune. Subsequently, the reluctance which that prince evinced to put himself at the head of the expedition to Quiberon Bay, and his return from L'Ile Dieu, with-

out landing, to England, contributed powerfully to the disasters of that ill-fated enterprise, and called forth the loudest complaints from the gallant Chouan chiefs.*

64. Meanwhile Louis XVIII., under the name of the Count de Lille, lived frugally and in retirement at Verona, until the near approach of Napoleon's victorious arms, in 1796, obliged him to quit the territories of the republic, which he did, after having in vain solicited the suit of armour which Henry IV. had presented to the Senate of Venice. He afterwards established himself at Blanckenburg, where various unsuccessful efforts were made, which have already been mentioned, to induce Buonaparte to play the part of General Monk, and facilitate the restoration of the royal family to the throne of France. The implication of the Royalists, however, in the conspiracy of the Club of Clichy, in 1797 [*ante*, Chap. xxiv. § 37], rendered it necessary for Louis XVIII. to retire further from the wrath of the enraged republicans; and he withdrew to Mitau in Livonia, where he enjoyed a pension of 200,000 roubles, or £25,000 a-year, from the Emperor Paul, which sufficed for the expenses of the exiled court. He was here afterwards joined by the Duke and Duchess d'Angoulême, the former of whom had served with credit in the Royalist corps of the Prince of Condé, while the latter brought to that distant solitude the recollection of the Temple, and the sympathy and commiseration of all Europe.

65. The sudden and unlooked-for conversion, however, of the fickle Paul to the alliance of the First Consul, immediately brought about a rigorous order to the august exiles to quit the Russian dominions in the depth of winter. They sought refuge in Prussia, where they were only admitted as private

* "Sire! The cowardice of your brother has ruined all. He could not appear on this coast but to lose or save everything. His return to England has decided our fate. Nothing remains for us now but to die in vain for your Majesty." — CHARETTE to LOUIS XVIII., 14th July 1795; CAPEFIGUE, *Histoire de la Restauration*, i. 80.

individuals; while, during the whole time, the Count d'Artois remained in the asylum he had obtained from the British government, in the palace of Holyrood, at Edinburgh. Louis XVIII. subsequently passed into Sweden, where he issued from Colmar, on the shores of the Baltic, two solemn protests, which have already been given, against the assumption of the imperial dignity by Napoleon [*ante*, Chap. xxxviii. §§ 51, 57]. He returned on the breaking out of the war between Russia and France in 1805, to his former residence at Mittau; but the peace of Tilsit, and subjection of Russia to the influence of France, having rendered that asylum no longer secure, he resolved to seek a last refuge on the British shores, and for that purpose embarked, with the whole royal family except the Count d'Artois, who was already at Holyrood, on board the Swedish frigate *Fraya*, and reached Yarmouth in the middle of August 1807.

66. The arrival of the illustrious exiles threw the British cabinet into some perplexity. Not that they had the slightest hesitation as to giving them that refuge in misfortune, which is at once the first duty and noblest privilege of an independent state to extend to suffering innocence; but that the *character* in which they were to be received involved an important question, which had never been fairly mooted since the commencement of the war, and the decision of which might exercise an important influence upon its ultimate issue, as well as the unanimity with which it was now prosecuted by the British nation. This was nothing less than the question—whether the object of the contest was to effect the restoration of the Bourbons to the French throne, or simply to provide security and maintain independence for the British nation. If the Count de Lille was recognised and treated as Louis XVIII. king of France, it would involve the British government either in an interminable war with Napoleon, or in the abandonment of a sovereign whose title they had expressly and solemnly recognised;

and it would afford the Opposition a pretext, of which they would gladly avail themselves, for representing the contest, not as one of defence and necessity on the part of England, but of aggression and injustice, to force upon France a dynasty of which the majority of the nation disapproved.

67. There appeared, also, not a little inconsistency in a nation which had itself assumed the right of choosing its rulers, now denying that right to another; and in the descendants of the house of Brunswick proclaiming to the world their recognition of the indefeasible right to that of Bourbon. Above all, it was of importance not to change the object of the war, which never had been to force a government upon an unwilling people, but solely to prevent that people from forcing one upon its neighbours; not to create a crusade for legitimacy, but to stop one for revolution. Influenced by these considerations, the majority of the British cabinet, after an anxious deliberation, which lasted three days, ranged themselves on the side of Mr Canning, who resisted the recognition of the illustrious stranger as king; and by a cabinet minute he was informed, that he should receive a secure and honourable asylum in Great Britain, but that he must not expect an express acknowledgment of his title to the throne.*

68. Louis XVIII., accordingly, resided in England till the fall of Napoleon, as a private but illustrious individual, and largely participated in the hospitality which its nobles and people have ever bestowed upon greatness in misfortune. He at first dwelt at Gos-

* "If the chief of the Bourbon family consents to live amongst us in a manner suitable to his actual situation, he will find a secure and honourable asylum; but we are too well aware of the necessity of securing for the war in which we are engaged the unanimous support of the English people, to do anything that might endanger the popularity which has hitherto attended the war. By recognising Louis XVIII. as king, we should only offer a favourable occasion to the enemies of the government to accuse it of introducing foreign interests into a war of which the object is purely British security."—*Cabinet Minute*, August 27, 1808, given in *CAPEFIGUE*, i. 195.

field Hall, a seat of the Duke of Buckingham, where he was soon after joined by the Duke and Duchess d'Angoulême, and the Duke de Berri; but in 1810 he quitted that residence for Hartwell, another seat of the same noble family, where he remained till the Restoration. The Count d'Artois, meanwhile, continued to sojourn with a small suite at the ancient palace of Holyrood, Edinburgh. By a singular coincidence, but strongly descriptive of the vicissitudes of time, the heir-apparent to the French throne, who afterwards mounted it only to feel the bitterness of royalty, spent the long and dreary years of exile in the ancient seat of the Stuart family, in the towers which had witnessed the distresses of Mary, the most beautiful queen of France, and the most unfortunate of the queens of Britain; and in the halls where fortune for a brief period had permitted to Charles Edward, when contending on the principle of legitimacy, with the aid of a gallant people, for the throne of his fathers, the splendours of royal elevation and the enjoyment of chivalrous devotion.

69. But, how unwarlike soever the dispositions of the Bourbon princes might be, and seriously as they might prefer the pacific retreats of Hartwell and Holyrood to the cares and the honours of royalty, the time at length arrived when it was no longer possible for them to remain in privacy; and when, willing or unwilling, they were of necessity forced into action. The approach of the allied armies to the Rhine, the passage of that river, and successful invasion of the eastern departments, the establishment of Wellington in the southern states of France, both roused into activity the dormant flame of loyalty in the provinces, and loudly called for the appearance of one or more princes of the royal blood on the soil of the monarchy, to combine the scattered efforts of its adherents, and assert the pretensions of the exiled family to the throne. Moreau had been looked to by them as a second Pichegru; proclamations were prepared to be addressed by him to Napo-

leon's soldiers: his death was regarded at Hartwell as the greatest calamity which had been sustained by the legitimist cause since the execution of Louis XVI. At the moment when the allied armies crossed the Rhine, Louis XVIII. addressed a proclamation to the Senate, calling on them to co-operate with him in overturning the tyranny of Napoleon; and circulated widely a secret address among all persons in authority whose dispositions were thought to be favourable—a letter in which, like a man who knew the character of the persons with whom he had to deal, he spoke little of honour or loyalty, but much of titles, dignities, and offices to be preserved, and injuries forgotten.*

70. Application was at the same time made to the British government, for the Bourbon princes to be permitted to join the different armies on the French territory; and the cabinet of St James's, after much deliberation, proceeding from a desire to do nothing which might indicate a disposition to coerce the wishes of the French people in the choice of their government, granted them permission to go, but as simple volunteers only. The current of events, however, ran too strongly to be arrested by these prudential measures, how judicious soever they may have been. The princes set out under this permission, restricted as it was. The Count d'Artois left Holyrood-

* "The King, availing himself of every opportunity of making known to his subjects the sentiments with which he is animated, has charged me to give, in his name, to ——— all the assurances which he can desire. His Majesty is well aware how much ——— has in his power, not only as regards endeavouring to shake off the yoke which oppresses him, but in seconding one day, by his intelligence, the authority destined to repair such a multitude of evils. The promises of the King are nothing but the consequences of the engagements he has undertaken in the face of Europe, which are—to forget the errors of his subjects, to recompense services, stifle resentments, legitimatise rank, consolidate fortunes; to bring about, in short, nothing but an easy transition from present calamities and alarms, to future tranquillity and happiness."—LE COMTE BLACAS. Hartwell, 1st December 1813.—CAPEFIGUE, *Hist. de la Restauration*, 1. 250.

house, and landed at Rotterdam on the 2d of February ; from whence he proceeded towards the headquarters of the allied armies, by Bale, Vesoul, and Langres ; the Duke d'Angoulême embarked for Spain, to join Wellington in the south of France, to be in readiness to take advantage of any Royalist movements that might occur in that quarter ; while the Duke de Berri set sail for Jersey, to be at hand, in case of the outbreak of a Royalist insurrection, which was thought to be in preparation in Brittany and La Vendée.

71. It was at this critical moment that the allied monarchs entered Troyes, and for the first time were brought in contact with the Royalists of France. In common with all its other provinces, the few remaining adherents of the ancient regime had received a great impulse in that city, which was the residence of the principal Royalist families of the east of France, from the rapid progress of the allied arms. The retreat of Napoleon towards Paris after the disastrous battle of La Rothière, seemed certainly to presage his approaching fall. Several gentlemen attached to the old family having resolved to commence the movement, assumed the white cockade after the Allies entered Troyes, and earnestly solicited an interview with the Emperor Alexander, which was at length granted. The Marquis of Widranges and M. Goualt were the persons who spoke on the occasion : they had suspended on their breasts the cross of St Louis and wore the white cockade, the wearing of which was forbidden in the empire under pain of death. "We entreat your Majesty," said they, "in the name of all the respectable inhabitants of Troyes, to accept with favour the wish which we form for the re-establishment of the royal house of Bourbon on the throne of France." "Gentlemen," replied Alexander, "I receive you with pleasure ; I wish well to your cause, but I fear your proceedings are rather premature. The chances of war are uncertain, and I should be grieved to see brave men like you compromised or sacrificed. We do not come ourselves to give a king to France ; we de-

sire to know its wishes, and to leave it to declare itself." "But it will never declare itself as long as it is under the knife," replied the Marquis ; "never as long as Buonaparte shall be in authority in France will Europe be tranquil." "It is for that very reason," replied the Czar, "that the first thing we must think of is to beat him—to beat him—to beat him." Alexander's humane prudence would appear to have been inspired by the spirit of foresight on this occasion ; for the day on which this conversation occurred at Troyes was the very one which was marked by the catastrophe at Champaubert. The Marquis Widranges, disappointed in his hopes of obtaining a declaration in favour of the Bourbons from the allied sovereigns, went on to Bale, where he joined the Count d'Artois, while M. Goualt, unhappily for himself, remained at Troyes. At the same time a person styling himself St Vincent, but who in reality was the Marquis de Vitrolles, one of the most devoted adherents of the ancient dynasty, arrived at the allied headquarters, bearing credentials, setting forth that he was entirely worthy of confidence, from persons high in authority in Paris, and entreating the monarchs to advance rapidly to the capital. But the issue was still too doubtful in the theatre of arms, and the divisions of the diplomatists too wide in the cabinet, to permit of any decided step being yet taken by the allied sovereigns in favour of the Royalist party.

72. While the cause of the Restoration in France was thus rather adjourned than damped, by the prudent ambiguity of the monarchs at Troyes, operations of a tardy and indecisive character, but still attended with important effects, had taken place on the part of the Grand Army, on the banks of the Seine. Instead of pushing military operations with vigour, and following closely the army of Napoleon down the Seine, Schwartzenberg, acting under the directions of his cabinet, which was desirous above all things to gain time, and avoid precipitating matters against Napoleon till the throne was at all events secured for his de-

scendants, put the main body of his army into cantonments, contenting himself with sending forward the corps of Wittgenstein and Wrede to follow on the traces of the retreating French. From Troyes to Paris, one road goes by Sens, Montargis, Nemours, and Fontainebleau, by the left bank of the Seine the whole way. But Napoleon having retired by the right bank, or eastern side of that river, it was necessary for the pursuing army, if it proposed to maintain its wings abreast on both banks, and keep on the trace of the retreating army, to force the passage of the Seine at Nogent, Bray, or Montereau, the only points below Troyes on the road towards Paris where there are stone bridges capable of affording a secure passage to artillery. All these bridges were in possession of the French, and strongly guarded; Oudinot and Victor lay on the opposite bank, after the departure of Napoleon, with twenty-two thousand men; — a body which was, however, fast being increased by conscripts hurried up from Paris. But such was the superiority of the allied forces, that these inconsiderable bodies of men could not have stood a day before them, if they had pressed on in good earnest for the French capital.

73. At length, having allowed his troops to repose four days around Troyes, to the infinite annoyance of Alexander, who burned with anxiety to push the war with vigour, Schwartzemberg on the 11th gathered up his gigantic array, and put his columns in motion to follow up the enemy. The Prince of Würtemberg took Sens by assault after a sharp conflict; and on the same day General Hardegg, with the vanguard of Wrede's corps, attacked the rear of the enemy near Romilly, and drove them into Nogent, which was stormed, after a most gallant resistance by General Bourmont, and evacuated next day, after the bridge over the Seine had been destroyed. The prisoners made in these conflicts having given the important information that Napoleon, with the main body of his forces, had diverged towards Sézanne, in the direction of Blücher's

army, and that an inconsiderable cordon of troops alone remained in his front, Schwartzemberg resolved to act with more vigour. He accordingly, next day, crossed the corps of Wrede and Wittgenstein over the Seine at Bray and Pont-sur-Seine, and moved them upon Donnemarie and Provins; whilst those of the Prince-Royal of Würtemberg and General Bianchi (who had succeeded Prince Colloredo in the command of his corps, the prince having been disabled by a wound on the 6th) advanced from Sens to Montereau, where the former crossed over, while the latter moved down its left bank towards Moret. The establishment of these powerful corps in that quarter, where there was no force of any magnitude to oppose them, led to the most important results, and showed how speedily the war, at this period, might have been terminated by a vigorous and concerted movement of the whole allied forces.

74. Moret was occupied next day: Nemours was taken by Platoff, with a whole battalion: Selsavin, with his light horse, made himself master of Montargis, and pushed on his advanced posts to the gates of Orleans. The palace and forest of Fontainebleau fell into the hands of the Cossacks: Auxerre was carried by assault, and its garrison, which endeavoured to cut its way through the attacking force, put to the sword. The whole plain between the Seine and the Loire was inundated with the enemy's light troops, which already showed themselves beyond Fontainebleau on the road to the capital. Montereau was strongly occupied by the Austrians, while Schwartzemberg's headquarters were advanced to Nogent, between which and Bray the immense reserves of the allied Grand Army were placed. Paris was in consternation: already the reserve parks and heavy baggage of Victor had reached Charenton, within a few miles of its gates; the peasants of the plain of Brie, flying to the capital, reported that uncouth hordes with long beards, armed with lances, cut down trees on the sides of the highways, and roasted oxen and

sheep whole, over fires kindled with their wood, which they devoured half raw. Meanwhile fame, magnifying the approaching danger, already announced that two hundred thousand Tartars and Calmucks were approaching to sack and lay waste the metropolis of science and the arts.

75. Such was the alarming state of affairs to the south of the capital, when Napoleon, at the head of his indefatigable Guards and cuirassiers, came across to the valley of the Seine, by Guignes, through the forest of Brie. The advanced guard of this array found the roads covered with waggons converging from all quarters towards the capital, filled with the trembling inhabitants, who were flying before the Cossacks. Instantly the living loads were disburdened; the waggons filled with the soldiers, or laid aside, and their horses harnessed to the guns; and every horse and man that could be pressed from the adjacent villages attached to the vehicles to hurry them forward. It was full time. The plain of Brie was covered with fire and smoke; the retiring columns under Victor and Oudinot, severely pressed by the enemy, were straining every nerve to preserve the cross-road to Châlons, by which Napoleon had promised to arrive. But so great was the superiority of the enemy, that it was doubtful whether they could maintain their ground for another hour, in which event the junction of the two armies would have been rendered impossible. No sooner, however, were the well-known standards of the cuirassiers seen, than cries of *Vive l'Empereur!* ran, like an electric shock, along the line; the retreat was stopped at all points; already the retiring columns were preparing to turn on their pursuers: while the Allies, sensible, from the change, of the presence of Napoleon, instantly became as cautious and circumspect as they had recently before been confident and audacious. Wearied with their unexampled exertions, the troops were halted where they had thus checked the advance of the enemy; soon the soldiers sank to sleep on the very ground where

they stood, and the headquarters of the Emperor were established in the village of Guignes, where he passed the night.

76. In the course of the night, and early on the following morning, large reinforcements joined the French headquarters from the army of Spain. The arrival of these bronzed veterans, upon whose steadiness perfect reliance could be placed, and the successive coming up of the corps which had inflicted such wounds on the army of Silesia, enabled the Emperor, on the following morning, to resume the offensive at the head of fifty-five thousand men. Orders were given to the troops to collect bread for three days' march; the knowledge that they were about to attack the enemy under the direction of Napoleon, coupled with their marvellous successes over the army of Silesia, had restored all their wonted enthusiasm to the soldiers. They marched as to assured victory. By daybreak the forward movement commenced at all points. Oudinot, supported by Kellerman's dragoons, pressed on the retiring columns of Wittgenstein, in the direction of Nogent; Macdonald pushed the Bavarians with the utmost vigour back on Bray, by Donnemarie; while Victor was despatched by Villeneuve le Comte towards Montereau, with orders to make himself master of its important bridge over the Seine that very night. Count Pahlen, who was at Mormant with Wittgenstein's advanced guard, consisting of three thousand infantry and eighteen hundred horse, was now in a most hazardous situation; for he was well aware he would be the first victim of the French Emperor's furious attack, and yet his orders were to remain where he was, as the arrival of Napoleon on the Seine had never been contemplated. In this extremity he remained all night under arms, resolved to resist to the last extremity. Shortly after daybreak the tempest was upon him, and he began slowly, and in the best order, to retreat towards Nangis, the infantry in squares, with the horse and some weak regiments of Cossacks and a few guns to protect the flanks and rear.

77. For two hours the retreat was conducted with perfect regularity, notwithstanding the incessant fire of the French horse-artillery, and attacks of their cavalry; but at length the assaults became more frequent, and the veteran cuirassiers under Milhaud, who had just come up from Spain, burning with desire to restore the lustre of their arms, charged on three sides at once with such vehemence, that the cavalry were entirely routed, the guns taken, and the infantry broken. The defeat was now irretrievable. So complete was the disorder that Wittgenstein himself, who came up with reinforcements, was swept away by the torrent, and narrowly escaped being made prisoner. Eleven guns and forty caissons were captured, and two thousand one hundred men made prisoners, besides nine hundred who fell on the field of battle. So complete was the destruction of some of the Russian regiments, that that of Silenguinsk alone, which was not broken till after it had gallantly repulsed repeated charges of cavalry, lost one thousand three hundred and fifty-nine men; and it, with that of Revel, which suffered nearly as much, ceased to exist, and were marked in the muster-rolls as "sent to Plotsk to be recruited." Yet, though deeply affected by such a chasm in his devoted followers, Alexander retained no rancour towards Pahlen; and seeing him, for the first time after the combat, at the barriers of Paris, said to him—"You think I am angry with you; but I know you were not in fault." The field of battle presented a striking proof of the profound and widespread excitement which this terrible contest had awakened throughout the world; for it showed the bodies of the hardy steeds of Tartary, and the fiery coursers of Andalusia, which had fallen in combat under the walls of Paris. It seemed to realise, after the lapse of a thousand years, that fabled conflict of the Saracens and Christians around that capital, in the time of Charlemagne, to which the genius of Ariosto has given immortality.

78. While this bloody combat was

occurring under the eye of Napoleon on the left, the Bavarians in the centre rapidly retreated from their position at Villeneuve le Comte and Donnemarie; and such was the fatigue of the cavalry of the Imperial Guard, who were intrusted with their pursuit, that they were unable to follow them. Macdonald, however, pressed vigorously on Hardeg's division as it fell back, and took many prisoners and a large quantity of baggage. Victor, moving upon Montereau, came upon a Bavarian division posted on the heights of Valjouan. They were immediately attacked in the most vigorous manner in front by General Gerard, and in rear by Bordesoult, and soon broken. Nothing but the failure of General L'Héritier, who neglected to charge the fugitives, as he might have done, when first thrown into disorder, preserved the Bavarian division from total ruin: as it was, they only made their escape in the greatest disorder, and after sustaining a very considerable loss. Such, however, was the exhaustion of Victor's troops, from the excessive fatigue which they had lately undergone, that he was unable to follow out his directions, by making himself master of the town and bridge of Montereau; in consequence of which, the Bavarians, who had rallied under the protection of some squadrons of Schwartzberg's hulans, effected their retreat across the Seine, though weakened by the loss of two thousand five hundred men. The enemy occupied in force the town of MONTEREAU, and the castle of Surville, which commanded the bridge. Their troops consisted of two Austrian divisions under Bianchi, and the Württembergers—in all about eighteen thousand men.

79. When Schwartzberg was made acquainted, which he was on the evening of the 17th, with these disasters which had befallen the two corps of Wittgenstein and Wrede, which had been pushed across the Seine, he immediately summoned a council of war, which was attended by the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia. It was evident to all that the misfor-

tunes had been owing to the separation of the army of Silesia from the Grand Army; it was resolved, therefore, as soon as possible, to reunite them in the direction of Troyes, and give battle in front of that town. For this purpose, orders were given to fall back at all points, while Blücher was directed, as soon as his troops were in a condition to resume offensive operations, to incline to his left, so as to facilitate the proposed junction. At the same period, principally to gain time, a flag of truce was despatched from the allied headquarters to Napoleon, to say that they were surprised at the offensive movement made by the French army, as they had agreed to the terms of peace proposed by Caulaincourt at Chatillon, and had given orders to their plenipotentiaries to sign the preliminaries accordingly, and they proposed in consequence an immediate suspension of hostilities.

80. Colonel Par, who bore the flag of truce from the allied headquarters, arrived at those of Napoleon late on the night of the 17th. The circumstance of the Allies proposing terms of accommodation after these defeats, coupled with the fact of a letter having been written by the Empress Marie Louise to her father, determined Napoleon to seize the opportunity of opening a communication directly with the Emperor Francis. The Council of State, which had assembled at Paris to deliberate on the terms offered at Chatillon, to be immediately considered, had been, with the exception of one member, unanimously of opinion that they should be accepted. Napoleon, however, had always determined in his own mind to make the negotiation entirely dependent on the progress of military events; and he, accordingly, gave the strongest injunctions to Caulaincourt, however near he might come to the point, to avoid committing himself to any treaty without his special authority. The successes at Champaubert, Montmirail, and Vauchamps had entirely confirmed him in these ideas; and the very night the first advantage was gained, as already mentioned, he had written to

Caulaincourt to try and gain time, and, above all things, to "*sign nothing*." His recent successes still further elevated his hopes, and he addressed a letter from Nangis to the Emperor of Austria on the same night, stating that he was extremely anxious to enter into a negotiation; but that, after the brilliant victories he had gained, he now looked for more favourable terms than had been proposed at Chatillon. At the same time he wrote to Caulaincourt, that the *carte blanche* he had formerly received was merely to save Paris, which appeared to be endangered after the battle of La Rothière; but that great successes had since been gained; that the necessity no longer existed; and, in consequence, his extraordinary powers were *recalled*, and henceforth the negotiation was to pursue its ordinary course. Having done this, he resolved to delay for some days closing with the allied advances towards an armistice, and to follow up with the utmost vigour the tide of success which was now setting in in his favour.

81. Situated twenty leagues to the south of Paris at the confluence of the Seine and the Yonne, the town of Montereau presents one of the most agreeable objects in France to the gaze of the traveller. The part which lies on the left bank of the Yonne, which is the most considerable, is joined to the right bank by a bridge of stone. Another bridge, famous for having been the scene of the murder of the Duke of Burgundy in 1419, unites the opposite banks of the Seine. These two rivers, which unite at Montereau, with the numerous barks which carry on their active navigation, give the town a gay and joyous aspect, which is increased by the smiling appearance of the vineyards and meadows adjoining it on the south and east, and the country-houses and villas glittering around it in the sun. The traveller who approaches from the side of Paris involuntarily halts on the summit of the heights of Surville, which overhang the town on the northern bank, to gaze on the lovely scene which lies spread out like a map be-

neath his feet: he would do well to remember that there, beside the little cross adjacent to the chateau, stood Napoleon during one of the LAST of his many victories. On the evening of the 18th, the French troops assembled in imposing masses on these heights, which completely commanded the bridges and town beneath; the artillery of the Guard was placed on either side of the road near the cross; and the Emperor took his station in person amidst the guns, to direct their fire, for the enemy still held the town. They had strongly barricaded the bridges, and everything presaged a bloody conflict.

82. It was not, however, till late in the day, and after a severe conflict, that these important heights fell into the hands of the French troops. Bianchi, fully sensible of their importance, had during the night occupied them in force with the troops of Würtemberg, strongly supported by artillery; and Victor, who in the morning commenced the attack on the position, was repulsed, and his son-in-law, the brave General Chateau, killed, when in person leading on the grenadiers to the assault. Gerard was upon this directed to supersede Victor in the command of his corps, and immediately advanced to the attack. Undismayed by the fire of forty pieces of artillery, which the German batteries poured upon him from the heights of Surville, he bravely and repeatedly led his troops almost to the very mouth of the guns. But it was in vain: the undaunted cannoneers made good the post assigned to them; noon was far past, and evening at that inclement season was fast approaching, while still the heights were in the hands of the enemy. Then Napoleon came up with the artillery and cavalry of the Guard, at the gallop, and, desirous of profiting by the few hours of daylight which still remained, he instantly brought forward forty pieces of the reserve artillery, and disposed his redoubtable Old Guard and cuirassiers to aid the renewed attack of Gerard with all their forces. Thirty thousand men, supported by sixty pieces of cannon, now

marched fiercely forward, under the very eye of the Emperor, amidst cries of *Vive l'Empereur!* Despairing of maintaining his post, which was only defended by twelve thousand combatants, against such an accumulation of forces, the Prince of Würtemberg drew off his men towards the bridge in his rear; at first in good order, and presenting an undaunted front to the imperial cavalry, which now thundered in close pursuit. But by degrees, as they descended the southern and steeper face of the heights towards the bridges, and got entangled in the hollow way through which the road passes to them, they fell into confusion; and infantry, cavalry, and artillery, breaking their array, rushed headlong to the only issue by which they could hope for escape from the bloody sabres of the cuirassiers.

83. The Prince-Royal of Würtemberg, however, at this dreadful moment exerted himself with equal skill and resolution to stem the torrent. He was at one time nearly enveloped by the French cavalry on the bridge, fighting with his own hand, to gain time for the troops to cross over; and by the vigour which he displayed, and the noble example which he set, he succeeded in enabling the greater part of them to get in safety to the other side, where they were received by Bianchi with his hitherto untouched Austrian divisions. Meanwhile Napoleon had established himself with the artillery of the Guard on the now abandoned heights of Surville, and soon sixty pieces of cannon opened a close and concentric discharge on the dense masses which were crowding over the bridge. Such was the eagerness of the Emperor, that he resumed, after twenty years' cessation, his old occupation as a gunner; and, as at the siege of Toulon in 1793, himself levelled and pointed a cannon. Meanwhile the Austrian batteries below, on the opposite bank, replied with vigour to the fire of the French pieces; and the old cannoneers of the Imperial Guard, hearing the whistle of the balls above their heads, besought the Emperor to retire from the front,

to a situation of less danger. "Courage, my friends!" he replied; "the bullet which is to kill me is not yet cast." Protected by the fire of such a powerful artillery on the heights above them, the mere discharges of which shivered the windows of the neighbouring chateau of Surville to pieces, the French chasseurs pressed so rapidly on the last columns of the Würtembergers, that there was no time to fire the mines for destroying the bridge; the pursuing horsemen crossed over pell-mell with the fugitives, the division of Duhesme rapidly passed after them, and, amidst the shouts of the inhabitants, drove the enemy entirely out of Montereau; the Allies retiring after having destroyed the bridge over the Yonne, which stopped the pursuit, in the direction of Sens.

84. This bloody combat, which was one of the most obstinately contested of the campaign, and inferior to few ever directed by Napoleon in brilliancy and valour, cost the French three thousand men killed and wounded, principally in consequence of the destructive fire of grape, so long kept up by the Würtemberg artillery from the heights of Surville. But the loss of the enemy was as great in killed and wounded, and they had to lament in addition above two thousand prisoners, six guns, and four standards. "My heart is relieved," said Napoleon, on beholding the flight of the Allies across the bridge: "I have saved the capital of my empire." Great indeed was the moral effect of these repeated successes of the Emperor, both upon his own and the allied armies. It restored the prestige of his name, the magic of his renown, which the long-continued disasters in Russia and Germany had sensibly dimmed. The young conscripts deemed themselves invincible under his direction; the veterans recommenced the stories of Austerlitz and Jena. Confounded by such a succession of disasters as had befallen their arms in so many different quarters, within so short a period, the allied generals began seriously to fear that the star of Napoleon was

again in the ascendant, and to resume, in the Austrian councils at least, their former dread of his arms. Orders were immediately issued to the whole army to retreat to a concentrated position in front of Troyes, where it was proposed to join Blücher and give battle; the Seine was repassed at all points; Fontainebleau, Nemours, and Montargis were evacuated; and the allied host, retiring before the enemy, was soon assembled, still above a hundred thousand strong, between Nogent, Bray, and Troyes.

85. Wonderful as these successes were, they by no means came up to the expectations of the Emperor. His discontent was visible; his disappointment broke out on all occasions, and he was in an especial manner misled in his ideas of what might have been effected, by the achievements of the troops who fought under his own eyes. When in presence of Napoleon, no fatigues could exhaust, no dangers appal, no difficulties impede them; they made, without murmuring, almost superhuman exertions. But they were by no means either equally confident, or equally energetic, under the direction of his lieutenants; and not unfrequently sank under the exhaustion consequent on the unparalleled activity by which he was now striving to make genius supply the want of numbers. He could not be brought, however, to comprehend this difference. He constantly expected the troops to achieve, under all circumstances, as much as he saw they did when animated by his own presence; and never failed to ascribe to the weakness or indecision of the officers in command, the failure of any enterprise on which he had calculated as likely to produce brilliant results, which had, in fact, been owing to the want of the animating prestige of his name. His affairs were now so critical that he could not afford to gain only half success; nothing short of continued victory could extricate him from the host of enemies by whom he was encircled; and he was well aware that even an inconsiderable failure in any serious combat might be attended by the most calamitous results.

sense of this both inflamed his expectations and increased his violence; the most vehement ebullitions of wrath frequently took place against officers at the head of their troops; and even his oldest and most esteemed marshals were rendered the victims of a disappointment, which was entirely owing to his expecting from them more than it was in the power of human strength to achieve.

86. Victor was the first victim of these unbounded expectations and irritable moods of the Emperor. That marshal, as already noticed, had been ordered to push on to Montereau on the evening of the 17th, and doubtless great results might have been expected from the seizure of that important post and bridge over the Seine, at a time when two corps of the Allies, receding before Napoleon's columns, were still on the right bank of the river. In truth, however, Victor's men were so completely worn out with fatigue, that they were unequal to the task of carrying the position on the night when they arrived before it. But such was the Emperor's wrath at the attack not having been made, that he deprived Victor of the command of his corps, which he conferred on Gerard. Next evening, after the combat at Montereau was over, the unhappy marshal presented himself before Napoleon to reclaim against his dismissal. He was received, however, with such a storm of invective, directed not only against himself, but against the duchess his wife, whom Napoleon accused of keeping aloof from the Empress, and leaguely with the enemies of the court, that it

was only by recalling to his recollection the Italian campaigns, where they had begun the career of arms together, that Victor succeeded so far in appeasing his wrath as to obtain in lieu of his corps, which had been conferred upon Gerard, the command of two divisions of the Guard.*

87. Nor were inferior officers spared by the wrath which thus prostrated the marshals of the empire. L'Héritier was publicly reproached for having failed to charge at the decisive moment of the combat of Nangis; Guyot for having allowed some pieces of the artillery of the Guard to be surprised in bivouac the night before; General Dejean, one of the most distinguished officers of artillery, for having permitted the cannon ammunition to run short in the hottest of the fire at the heights of Surville; even the heroic Montbrun suffered the most cutting taunts for having, without resistance, abandoned the ridges and forest of Fontainebleau to the Cossacks. There can be no doubt that part of these reproaches were, in some degree, well founded, though others were altogether unjust. But the necessity of making any of them public at this critical juncture was not equally apparent; and it was evident to all, both that the Emperor's fatigue and anxiety had fearfully augmented the natural violence of his temper, and that the necessities of his situation had made him expect and calculate on achievements, both from his officers and soldiers, which it was beyond human strength to effect.

88. The day after the battle, Napo-

* "At the conclusion of the conference, in which he had made no impression on the Emperor, Victor said that, if he had committed a military fault, he had expiated it dearly by the stroke which had cut off his son-in-law, General Chateau. At the name Napoleon evinced the warmest emotion; he heard only the grief of the marshal, and strongly sympathised with it. Victor, then resuming confidence, protested anew that he would not leave the army. 'I will shoulder a musket,' said he; 'Victor has not forgotten his old occupation: I will take my place in the Guard.' These words at length disarmed the Emperor. 'Well, Victor,' said he, stretching out his hand, 'remain with us. I cannot restore to you your corps,

which I have bestowed on Gerard; but I give you two divisions of the Guard: go now, take the command of them, and let there be no separation betwixt us.' . . . Yet he was so far imbued with his feelings of resentment, that in the bulletin dated that day, giving an account of the combat of Montereau, he said, 'General Chateau will die; but he will die at least accompanied by the regrets of the whole army—a fate far preferable to that of a soldier who has only purchased the prolongation of his existence by surviving his reputation, and extinguishing the sentiments which French honour inspires in the circumstances in which we are placed.'"—FAIN, *Campagne de* 1814, 111-113; and *Moniteur*, 20th Feb. 1814.

leon remained at Surville, while his advanced guards in all directions followed the allied Grand Army up the valley of the Seine, towards Sens, Bray, and Nogent. Conceiving that Schwartzenberg's retreat was now decidedly pronounced, and being well aware of the nervousness of the Austrian generals about their lines of communication, he at the same time wrote to Marshal Augereau to resume the offensive at Lyons, and threaten the rear of the Grand Army from the side of Mâcon. That marshal's force, which originally, as already mentioned, consisted of twelve thousand men, had been considerably augmented by two divisions of iron veterans, drawn from Suchet's army in Catalonia, and the levies in Dauphiny and Savoy, which were commanded by Generals Marchand and Serras. These reinforcements had enabled him to assume so threatening an attitude at Lyons, that General Bubna, who commanded the extreme Austrian left in that quarter, which did not muster above fifteen thousand sabres and bayonets, had been under the necessity of evacuating the valley of the Rhone below the Jura, and concentrating his forces in the neighbourhood of Geneva. The communication over Mont Cenis with the Viceroy's army in the Italian plains had been re-established, and the course of the Saone to Mâcon was entirely cleared of the enemy. Napoleon therefore indulged sanguine hopes, and not without reason, that he would be able, by means of this auxiliary force, so to straiten the rear, and cut up the communications of the Grand Army, that their further stay in France would be rendered impossible. Already he dreamed of fresh conquests beyond the Rhine; and in his exultation more than once said—"I am nearer Munich than the Allies are to Paris."

89. But while Napoleon was, not altogether without reason, calculating upon these vast results from his successes, and looking to the incursions of his lieutenants to threaten the flanks and communications of the weightiest of his opponents, his own rear was menaced, and a new enemy was de-

scending from the north, who in the end came to tell with decisive effect upon the fortunes of the campaign. Notwithstanding the reluctance of Bernadotte to prosecute in person the invasion, and the long time which he had consumed in the separate contest with Denmark in the south of Jutland, the time had now arrived when it was no longer possible for him to avoid appearing, if not in person, at least by means of his generals, on the great theatre of action. The most urgent requisition had been made to him by the Emperor Alexander, to bring his forces into action; and as the peace with Denmark, and the blockade of Davoust in Hamburg by Benningsen's powerful army of reserve, forty-five thousand strong, which had been directed thither after the battle of Leipzig, left him no longer an excuse, he was obliged, however reluctant, to advance towards the Rhine. On the 10th of February he arrived at Cologne, from whence, two days afterwards, he published a proclamation to the French people, in which he vindicated his invasion of his native country, by the anxious desire which he felt that it should no longer continue, as it had been, the scourge of the earth; and on the ground of the solemn assurance which, he declared, he had received from the allied sovereigns, that they made war on France only to secure the independence of other states. Meanwhile Bulow, who commanded his advanced guard, had hitherto been unable to make any impression on Antwerp, even though aided by Sir Thomas Graham and eight thousand English troops. But he had been more successful at Bois-le-Duc, which was delivered up to him, with a hundred and fifty heavy cannon on its ramparts, by the inhabitants of the place. And Winzingerode having received considerable reinforcements at Namur, the siege of Antwerp was converted into a blockade; Bulow united the best part of his forces to those of the Russian commander, and both together took the road by Avesnes for Laon.

90. To reach the latter town, it was indispensable, in the first instance, to

gain possession of the former, as it covered the road by which Laon was to be approached. But Chernicheff, with the Russian advanced guard, appeared before Avesnes at daybreak on the 9th February, and it surrendered without resistance, with its weak garrison of two hundred men. By this capture four hundred English and Spanish prisoners, taken during the Peninsular War, were set at liberty. Napoleon had never expected that the Allies would have entered France on this side, and the frontier fortresses were wholly unprovided with the means of making any resistance. Rheims opened its gates the very next day; and the whole country between the Sarre and the Meuse, in the rear, disgusted with the intolerable exactions of the French armies, received the Allies with open arms. But these easy successes led to another of a more difficult and important character. Soissons, commanding as it does the only bridge in that quarter over the Aisne, and lying on the great *chaussée* from Laon to Paris, as well as several other roads which intersect each other in its centre, is a fortress which, in a strategical point of view, is of the very highest importance. It is an old town, adorned by a massy Gothic church, and surrounded by antiquated walls, which, however, had been armed and repaired, and put in a respectable posture of defence. Green and level meadows immediately adjoin it on all sides; but they are confined to the vicinity of the river; and at the distance of half a mile on either side, the road ascends the slopes of the more elevated plateau, on the summit of which it generally runs, and from the brows of which, plunging shot may be sent by artillery into the town beneath, to which the cannon on its ramparts, pointed upwards, were little calculated to make an effectual reply. Notwithstanding this disadvantage, however, the capture of the place was not likely to be an easy enterprise, as Napoleon, sensible of its importance, had intrusted its defence to the brave General Rusca, one of his old companions in arms in the Italian campaigns,

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who had under his command the depot of six regiments of the line, a thousand National Guards, and a hundred gendarmes; in all about four thousand five hundred men.

91. Braving the resistance which might be expected from so determined a character as General Rusca, at the head of so respectable a force, General Chernicheff offered to carry it by a *coup-de-main*, and for this purpose only demanded the advanced guard, consisting of four thousand five hundred men, with eighteen pieces of cannon. Though by no means sanguine of success, Winzingerode permitted the attempt to be made, throwing on Chernicheff the whole responsibility in case of failure—the usual resource of weak men who have to act with resolute ones. Chernicheff accordingly set out with his small but gallant band, and on the descent of the plateau from the side of Laon towards the valley of the Aisne, fell in with the French advanced guard, two thousand strong, consisting chiefly of National Guards, which was speedily put to the rout, and driven down the slope across the meadows into Soissons, with the loss of five hundred men. The Russians advanced, after this success, to within cannon-shot of the place, but purposely delayed the attack till next day, in order to throw the enemy off their guard, by leading them to suppose that there were nothing but Cossacks and light troops, incapable of attempting an assault, before the place. Early on the following morning, preparations for storming were made, and Chernicheff resolved to direct his principal attack against the *ête-de-pont*, and from thence force his way into the town. The infantry was directed to advance by the highway from Laon, while a detachment of light troops was despatched to take possession of a public-house, about ninety yards from the walls, to the right of the great road; and the Cossack regiments, each preceded by six pieces of artillery, advanced in a semicircle towards the walls, so as to distract the enemy as to the real point where an attack was to be made.

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92. These dispositions, executed with remarkable precision, proved entirely successful. The light infantry speedily made themselves masters of the public-house, and from its roof and windows kept up such a fire on the bridge-head, that it was abandoned, and the columns of infantry, advancing rapidly in pursuit, attempted to carry the gate, but were repulsed with loss. While re-forming his men for a second assault, signs of sudden disorder were observed on the rampart; and the Russians, though as yet ignorant of the cause, immediately took advantage of it to bring two petards up to the gates, which blew them partially off their hinges, and the light infantry, quickly running up, completed their destruction. The whole body of the assailants then rushed in, and pushed on with such vigour, that very little further resistance was attempted; three battalions succeeded in making their escape by the gates, on the opposite side towards Compiègne, which were not invested; but fourteen guns and three thousand six hundred men fell into the hands of the victors. The confusion on the rampart had been occasioned by the death of General Rusca, who was killed by a cannon-ball while bravely encouraging his men; and with him all presence of mind on the part of the garrison seemed to have been extinguished.

93. The capture of this important strategetical point, which Napoleon regarded of such value that he had commenced the tracing out of a great intrenched camp, capable of containing his whole army, in its vicinity, was a severe blow to him, and would have been immediately attended by the most important consequences, were it not for the succession of disasters which at this very time were befalling the army of Silesia, which rendered it extremely hazardous for the Russian general to pursue his success any further on the road from Laon to Paris. The capture of Soissons made Chernicheff acquainted with these important events; and, at the same time, Winzingerode received orders from Blücher to march to Rheims, in order to be at

hand to form a reserve for his forces, so grievously weakened by the bloody campaign of the last three weeks. Chernicheff therefore wisely concluded, that to retain Soissons would be to expose its garrison to certain destruction from the victorious French armies, now at no great distance; and, at the same time, weaken his detachment to such a degree as to endanger the whole. He therefore, though with bitter regret, abandoned his brilliant conquest the very day he had made it, and marched in the direction of Rheims, where he joined Winzingerode. Meanwhile a detachment of Mortier's troops reoccupied Soissons, which was again put in a posture of defence; and Sacken, York, and Langeron joined Blücher at Chalons, where the veteran marshal was indefatigably engaged in reorganising and concentrating his army. With such success were his efforts attended, and such was the magnitude of the resources still at his disposal, that by the 18th February he had collected forty-five thousand infantry and fourteen thousand cavalry, with which he was ready to renew active operations.

94. Napoleon, on the second day after the conflict of Montreuil, put his army in motion, and ascended the course of the Seine to Bray and Nogent. Everywhere the allied columns retired before him. At the latter town he found the most deplorable traces of the ravages of war, and decisive marks of the desperate stand which Bourmont, with his devoted rear-guard, had made ten days before against the attacks of the Allies. The walls were pierced with cannon-balls: many streets were in ruins: everywhere the traces of conflagration and destruction were to be seen. In the midst of these disasters, the Sisters of Charity had remained at their post, tending, with heroic devotion, in the public hospital, the wounded and suffering alike among their friends and their enemies. During this day's march good order was preserved in the allied columns, and the artillery and chariots, favoured by a clear bright frost, which made the fields everywhere passable, even for the heaviest carriages, were all brought

off in safety. But on the succeeding day the usual symptom of disorder and confusion appeared among the retreating host. The converging of so many different columns, and such a multitude of carriages towards one highway, necessarily produced great difficulty; and the allied troops, long accustomed to victory, loudly murmured at a retreat before a force little more than half of their own. The resolution, however, of the allied sovereigns to concentrate their forces, and accept battle in front of Troyes, had been definitely taken; Blücher was already in full march across from the banks of the Marne to the valley of the Seine to join them; the retreat was continued on the 21st towards Troyes, and on the evening of that day a hundred and forty thousand men were assembled between Mery, Arcis-sur-Aube, and Sommesous, covering all the approaches to Troyes. Such was the vigour with which Blücher reorganised his beaten army, that he appeared at the rendezvous at Mery with fifty thousand men and three hundred pieces of cannon.

95. Napoleon made no attempt to prevent the junction of the grand allied and Silesian armies. He remained several days at Nogent, employed in making a new distribution of his troops; and in sending orders to Augereau at Lyons, by whom he hoped the decisive blow against the rear of Schwartzemberg would be struck. The latter, surprised at the inactivity of the French Emperor, made a grand reconnaissance with ten thousand horse on the 22d, which brought on a heavy cannonade, but it led to nothing decisive. After it was over, the French, without being seriously molested, took up their line of battle between Poncy and Les Gréz, in sight of the Grand Army, which stood in front of Troyes, stretching on both sides of the Seine, from Mongueux on the right to Villacerf on the left. A great battle was expected on both sides, and each made preparations to receive it. But the spirit of the two hosts was widely different. The recent extraordinary success of the French had restored all

their former confidence to the soldiers; their trust in the star of the Emperor had returned; and, though well aware of the numerical superiority of their opponents, they had witnessed the confusion and precipitance of their retreat, and felt assured of victory. On the other hand, the Allies were depressed by the little fruit which they had derived from so many successes; they were mortified at the defeats they had recently sustained from an army not half their number; and felt no confidence in the ability or firmness of the Austrian commander-in-chief, at the head of so multifarious an array, to withstand the sudden and weighty strokes of Napoleon.

96. Above all, despondency and vacillation had taken possession of the generals at headquarters. They were dismayed at the prospect of a long retreat to the Rhine through a hostile population; and the Austrian officers, in particular, felt all their wonted apprehensions at the prospect of the army of Augereau, which report had magnified to forty thousand men, falling on their long line of communication towards the Jura. "The Grand Army," said they, "has lost half its numbers by the sword, disease, and wet weather; the country we are now in is ruined; the sources of our supplies are dried up; and all around us, the inhabitants are ready to raise the standard of insurrection. The loss of a battle, in such circumstances, would draw after it a retreat to the Rhine; where, in all probability, we should be met by the corps of Marshal Augereau, who has forty thousand men under his command. It has become indispensable to secure a retreat to Germany, and wait for reinforcements from thence, as well as to arrest the progress of the enemy in the south, before we think of resuming offensive operations." In the council of war held at Troyes on the 23d, these opinions prevailed with the majority, as is invariably the case where a serious decision is devolved upon a body, the *smallness* of whose numbers throws upon each individual a sense of responsibility, without the credit of decision. The

bolder counsels of the Emperor Alexander, who strongly urged that they should resume the offensive, and fight a great battle, were overruled. The retreat was accordingly continued all night through Troyes, which was abandoned next day; and, as confusion and disorder soon spread to an alarming extent in the retreating columns, it was deemed advisable to offer Napoleon an armistice, for which purpose Prince Wentzel Lichtenstein, one of Schwartzberg's officers, was despatched to his headquarters.

97. Napoleon received the aide-de-camp in the hamlet of Chartres, where he had passed the night. He brought, along with the proposal for an armistice, an answer from the Emperor Francis to the private letter which Napoleon had written to him six days before from Nangis—a sure proof that the separate interests of Austria were beginning to disjoint the alliance. This letter contained the most conciliatory expressions; admitted that the plans of the Allies had been seriously deranged; and concluded with stating, that, in the rapidity and force of his strokes, the Emperor recognised the former great character of his son-in-law. As usual with him, on such occasions, Napoleon entered into a long and confidential conversation with Prince Lichtenstein; and after it had continued a considerable time, asked him, whether the reports were well founded which were in circulation, as to the intention of the allied sovereigns to dethrone him, and replace the Bourbon family on the throne of France. Prince Lichtenstein warmly repudiated the idea, and assured the Emperor that the reports were altogether destitute of foundation. Napoleon, however, professed himself by no means satisfied with these explanations, and protested that the presence of the Duke de Berri in Jersey, that of the Duke d'Angoulême at Wellington's headquarters, and, above all, that of the Count d'Artois in Switzerland, in the rear of the Grand Army, were little calculated to allay his apprehensions on this head.

98. Towards evening the officer was

sent back with a haughty letter from Berthier to Schwartzberg, in which he stated that "the assurances given to your Highness of its being the wish of Austria to bring about a general pacification had induced the Emperor to accede to the proposal." The plenipotentiaries appointed to conclude the armistice, were Count Shuvaloff on the part of Russia, Duca on that of Austria, and Rauch for Prussia; and Lusigny was the place fixed on for the conference. The principal conditions were, that the passes of the Vosges mountains were to remain in the hands of the Allies; and that the line of demarcation between the two armies was to be the line of the Marne, as far as Chalons, for the Grand Army, and thence along the course of the Vele till it joins the Aisne, for that of Silesia. But so confident was Napoleon in the returning good fortune of his arms, that, contrary to the wishes of the Austrians, he would not consent to a suspension of hostilities while the conferences for an armistice were going on; and Alexander, who was strongly averse to the armistice, took advantage of this circumstance to direct Winzingerode to pay no attention to any intimation he might receive of a suspension of hostilities, till he received a special order from himself.

99. It was not without the most vigorous remonstrances on the part both of Blucher and Alexander, that this perilous resolution to retreat was at this period taken by the allied council. On being informed of the intention of the Austrian generalissimo to retreat from before Troyes, the old marshal became literally furious; openly charged him with bribery and treachery; and declared he would on no account retreat with him, but would separate and march direct on Paris, in order to compel Napoleon to give up the pursuit of the Grand Army, and turn his forces against that of Silesia. Alexander, on being informed of these intentions, approved of them, but directed the field-marshal previously to give the details of his plan. Blucher immediately, with his own hand, wrote out on a torn sheet of paper the fol-

lowing note :—"1. The retreat of the Grand Army will cause the whole French nation to take up arms; and the French who have declared for the good cause will suffer. 2. Our victorious armies will lose heart. 3. We shall retreat into a country where there are no supplies, and where the inhabitants, being forced to give up their last morsel, will be reduced to despair. 4. The Emperor of the French will recover from the consternation into which he has been thrown by our successes, and will, as before, win back the confidence of the nation. Most heartily do I thank your Majesty for the permission you have given me to resume the offensive. I flatter myself with the hopes of success, if your Majesty will give positive orders to Generals Winzingerode and Bulow to place themselves under my command. Joined by them, I shall march on Paris, fearing neither Napoleon nor his marshals, if they should come to meet me."

100. A lamentable catastrophe attended the return of good fortune to the cause of Napoleon, and stained, if it did not disgrace his arms. On the evening of the 23d, the French advanced posts appeared before the gates of Troyes, and notwithstanding the sort of truce which existed, some skirmishing took place between the videttes on either side. During the night, however, the town was entirely evacuated by the allied troops, and at daybreak on the following morning Napoleon entered it without opposition, in the midst of his Guards. The middle and poorer classes, who were unanimous in favour of his government, received the Emperor with unbounded enthusiasm, although the higher classes, who were for the most part attached to the exiled dynasty, kept aloof. As he passed through the streets crowds surrounded him, striving to kiss his hand or touch his horse, and with loud acclamations saluted him as the saviour of his country. The first thing he did was to order the arrest of the Marquis de Widranges and M. Goualt. The former, having been secretly forewarned* of his

danger by Fouché, had set out some time before for Bâle, and so escaped; but the latter, in spite of all the entreaties of his friends, had persisted in remaining in Troyes, being unwilling to leave his wife, who could not be moved, and to whom he was tenderly attached. He was immediately arrested, brought before a military commission, and condemned to death. M. Duchatel, with whom the Emperor was lodged, threw himself at his feet, and, with M. Goualt's family, implored pardon, reminding him how much a deed of clemency would add to the lustre of his victory. But the Emperor, though often inclined to mercy when the first fit of passion was over, on this occasion was inexorable, and the unfortunate gentleman was left to his fate. At eleven at night he was led out, by torchlight, surrounded by gendarmes, to the place appointed for public executions; on his back and his breast was affixed a placard, with the words, written in large characters, "Traitor to his country;" and he died with heroic firmness, without permitting his eyes to be bandaged, and protesting with his last breath his devotion to his king and country.

101. Napoleon had now performed the most extraordinary and brilliant military achievements in his long and eventful career. Recovering his army by the force of his resolution and the energy of his character, from the lowest point of depression, he had at once arrested the course of disaster, after an apparently decisive defeat, and struck the most terrible blows against his adversaries. Suddenly stopping his retreat, crossing the country, and falling perpendicularly on the line of march of the army of Silesia, he had surprised the Prussian marshal in a straggling and unguarded situation, where his scattered corps fell an easy prey to the superior force which was directed against them. At Champaubert, Montmirail, and Vauchamps, he had inflicted a loss of fully twenty thousand men on that iron band of veterans, without being weakened on his own side by more than a fourth part of the number; while at

* CHATEAUBRIAND, *Memoirs*, vi.

Nangis and Montereau he had stopped the advance of the Grand Army, inflicted on them a loss of twelve thousand men, and thrown back their victorious standards across the Seine. Such was the terror produced by his arms, that irresolution and circumspection had succeeded to boldness and decision in the allied councils. The intrepid advice of Alexander and Blucher was disregarded; and a hundred and forty thousand of the bravest troops in Europe abandoned the capital of Champagne, retreated ignominiously before sixty thousand, and concluded by soliciting an armistice from them. When it is recollected that these marvellous results were gained by a force which never could bring above seventy thousand sabres and bayonets into the field, against a host of more than double that number, composed of the veteran soldiers who had saved Russia and delivered Germany, and that though thus inferior upon the whole, he was always superior at the point of attack, it must be admitted that a more brilliant series of military movements is not recorded in history; and that, if none other existed to signalise his capacity, they alone would be sufficient to render the name of Napoleon immortal. To say that they were in the end unsuccessful, is no impeachment of their merit; if they did not achieve success, they deserved it.

"Ne crains point de succès qui souille ta mémoire,
Le bon et le mauvais sont égaux pour ta gloire:
Et dans un tel dessein le manque de bonheur
Met en péril ta vie, et non pas ton honneur."*

* CORNEILLE, *Cinna*, act i. scene 3.

102. It must at the same time be observed, that the genius of the French Emperor was seconded to the utmost by the opposite and contradictory qualities of the two commanders-in-chief of the allied armies. Blucher, daring, impetuous, and confident, was hastening on to Paris, with his columns so far dissevered, and so incapable of supporting each other in case of danger, that they seemed at once to invite a flank attack, and defy mutual co-operation; while Schwartzberg, slow, methodical, and circumspect, was alike disqualified to lend him any assistance in case of need, or relieve him from the pressure of the enemy by the vigour of his own operations. Thus the former was as likely to run headlong into hazards as the latter was, by never daring, never to win. The extreme anxiety of the one for a vigorous advance, exposed him as much to danger, as the strong disposition of the other for the favourite Austrian manœuvre of a retreat, disabled him from obviating it. The great merit of the French Emperor—and, situated as he was, it was of the very highest kind—consisted in his clear appreciation of the opposite qualities of these two commanders; in the genius which made him perceive, that the hardihood of the one would expose him to perils, while the circumspection of the other would admit of his being almost entirely neglected; and in the moral courage which, refusing to be subdued even by the most serious disasters, saw in them only the germ of false confidence to his antagonists, and the opportunity of recalling victory to the imperial standards for himself.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

CAMPAIGN OF 1814—FROM THE ARMISTICE OF LUSIGNY TO THE
BATTLE OF LAON.

1. MATTERS had now arrived at that point, from the moral effect of these successes on the councils of the majority of the Allies, that the success of the invasion of France, and with it the holding together of the Grand Alliance, hung by a thread. The influence of Alexander, great as it was, and strenuously as it had been exerted on the side of vigorous measures, was unable singly to stem the torrent of despondency, or retain the allied army in that intrepid course, from which alone ultimate salvation to the cause of Europe could be hoped. At this crisis, however, he received the most vigorous co-operation from the moral courage of LORD CASTLEREAGH; and it was to the combined firmness of these two great men that the triumph of the alliance is beyond all question to be ascribed. On the 25th February the allied sovereigns assembled at the house of General Knesebeck, at Bar-sur-Aube, as from illness he was unable to leave his apartment, or to attend the council elsewhere. Besides the sovereigns, the following persons were present—Prince Volkonsky, Baron Diebitch, Count Nesselrode, Princes Schwartzberg and Metternich, Count Radetsky, Lord Castlereagh, and Prince Hardenberg. At this council Alexander strongly supported, as he had always done, the policy of vigorous operations, and openly announced that he would authorise Blücher to recommence the offensive, notwithstanding the armistice of Lusigny, which did not extend beyond the Grand Army, if he could be reinforced by the corps of Bulow and Winzingerode, the former of which was

still in Flanders, though on the French frontier, while the latter was in the neighbourhood of Laon.

2. But here a very great, and what appeared to the majority of the council an insurmountable difficulty, presented itself. These corps belonged to the army of Bernadotte, and took their orders only from him: that prince had not yet passed Liege: a long and tedious negotiation appeared unavoidable before he could be brought to consent to such a dislocation of the troops hitherto under his direct command; his evident and well-known backwardness at co-operating in the invasion of France, rendered it certain that he would do everything in his power to prevent the transference of the largest and most efficient part of his army to so inveterate an enemy of his native country as Marshal Blücher; while at the same time the precarious situation of the alliance, and the evident hesitation of Austria, rendered it a matter of extreme hazard to take any steps which might afford him a pretext for breaking off from it. Yet a decision required to be come to without an instant's delay; for Napoleon had not consented to any suspension of military operations during the conferences.

3. Alexander strongly urged the expedience of withdrawing the corps of Winzingerode, Bulow, and Woronzoff from Bernadotte's command; but he concurred with Schwartzberg in holding, that this was *impossible* without his previous consent, and the majority of the council inclined to this opinion. Upon this Lord Castlereagh inquired of the most experienced officers present, whether, in a military point of

view, this change was indispensable to the success of the proposed operations. They answered that it was. Upon this he immediately stated that, in that case, the plan must be adopted, and the necessary orders given immediately; that England had a right to expect that her allies would not be deterred from a decisive course by any such difficulties as had been urged; that, if necessary, he would withhold the monthly subsidies from the Crown-Prince till he consented to the arrangement; and that he took upon himself the whole responsibility of any consequences that might arise so far as regarded that prince. Such was the weight of England at that period in the alliance, as the universal paymaster, as well as the deserved influence of her representative, from his personal character; and such the effect of this manly course, adopted at the decisive moment, that it prevailed with the assembly. The requisite orders were given that very day that "the Grand Army should retreat to Langres, and there, uniting with the Austrian reserves, accept battle; and that the

* As this is a point of the highest importance, the following extract from a very interesting letter from the Earl of Ripon, who was confidentially engaged with Lord Castlereagh at that period, to the brother of the latter, the present Marquis of Londonderry, is subjoined:—"From Napoleon's central position between the armies of Blücher and Schwarzenberg, he was enabled to fall with his main strength upon each of them singly; and experience had proved that neither of them was separately adequate to withstand his concentrated efforts. Blücher's army was much inferior in number to Schwarzenberg's, and the thing to be done, therefore, was to reinforce Blücher to such an extent as might insure the success of his movements. But where were these reinforcements to be found? There was nothing immediately at hand but a body of Russians under St Priest, who were on their march to Rheims, to join the corps to which they belonged in Blücher's army; and they were manifestly insufficient for the purpose. But there were two other strong corps, one of Prussians under General Bülow, and one of Russians under Winzingerode, who were on their march into France from Flanders, and might be brought forward with decisive effect. They belonged, however, to the army of the Crown-Prince of Sweden, who had not at that period, I think, crossed the Rhine; they were under his orders, and he was very tenacious of his authority over them; and

army of Silesia should forthwith march to the Marne, where it was to be joined by the corps of Winzingerode, Bülow, and Woronzoff, and immediately advance to Paris." It is not going too far to assert, that to this resolution, and the moral courage of the minister who brought it about, the downfall of Napoleon is immediately to be ascribed."*

4. It was not, however, without the utmost difficulty that this decisive resolution was adopted by the allied sovereigns. The majority of the council maintained that it would be most advantageous for both armies to retreat. Alexander decidedly opposed this opinion; adding that, rather than do so, he would separate from the Grand Army, with the guards, grenadiers, and Wittgenstein's corps, and march with Blücher on Paris. "I hope," added he, turning to the King of Prussia, "that your Majesty, like a faithful ally, of whose friendship I have had so many proofs, will not refuse to accompany me." "I will do so with pleasure," answered that brave prince; "I have long ago placed my

when it was suggested that the only mode of adequately reinforcing Blücher was by placing these corps at his disposal without a moment's delay, the difficulty of withdrawing them from Bernadotte's command, without a previous and probably tedious discussion with him, was represented by a great authority as *insurmountable*. Lord Castlereagh was present when this matter was discussed at the council; and the moment he understood that, militarily speaking, the proposed plan was indispensable to success, he took his line. He stated, that in that case the plan *must* be adopted, and the necessary orders *immediately* given; that England had a right to expect that her allies would not be deterred from a decisive course by any such difficulties as had been urged; and he boldly took upon himself the *whole responsibility* of any consequences that might arise, as far as regarded the Crown-Prince of Sweden. His advice prevailed: the battle of Laon was fought successfully, and no further efforts of Buonaparte could oppose the march of the Allies to Paris, and their triumphant occupation of that city. It is not, then, too much to say, that the vigour and energy displayed by Lord Castlereagh at this crisis, decided the fate of the campaign."

— LORD RIPON TO MARQUIS LONDONDERRY, July 6, 1839, given in an *Appendix to the Marquis's Letter to Lord Brougham in answer to his Strictures on Lord Castlereagh*, pp. 57, 58.

troops at your Majesty's disposal." "But why should you leave me behind you?" added the Emperor Francis. But these protestations of the allied sovereigns, how honourable soever to themselves, determined nothing: the necessity of the Grand Army retreating was resolutely maintained; the separation of Wittgenstein and the Russians would have sent it headlong across the Jura, and probably dissolved the alliance.

5. It was Lord Castlereagh's interposition, by providing the means of adequately reinforcing Blücher, *without weakening or dislocating the Grand Army*, which really determined the campaign; and so satisfied was Alexander of this, that the moment the plan was agreed to, he wrote a note to Blücher with his own hand, in pencil, informing him that the corps of Winzingerode and Bulow were now placed under his orders, and authorising him to act according to his discretion, on the sole condition of observing certain rules of military prudence. At the same council it was determined to form out of the German and Austrian reserves which were about to cross the Jura, combined with the corps of Bianchi, a fresh army, to be called the army of the south, fifty thousand strong, which was to be placed under the direction of Prince Hesse-Homburg, and was to march on Mâcon, drive back Augereau, and secure the flank and rear of the Grand Army from insult; while Bernadotte and the Duke of Saxe-Weimar were to remain in the Low Countries, and complete the reduction of Antwerp, and a few other strong places which held out for the Emperor in Flanders.

6. No sooner had this council broken up, than messengers were despatched in all directions with the orders which had been agreed on at this memorable conference. The two armies, so recently united, again separated. The huge masses of the Grand Army slowly retired towards Langres; and Blücher, overjoyed at being liberated from the paralyzing authority of Schwartzberg, resumed his way towards Châlons and the Marne, followed by the great body of the French army, the

corps of Oudinot and Macdonald alone being despatched on the traces of the Grand Army. As soon as Blücher perceived that the weight of Napoleon's force was directed against him, he despatched a messenger to inform Schwartzberg of the fact; the retrograde movement of the Grand Army, the leading columns of which had passed Chaumont, and were rapidly approaching Langres, was stopped; and preparations were made for again resuming the offensive, in order to relieve the army of Silesia from the dangers which threatened it. Meanwhile that gallant host, unwearied in combat, and burning with desire to retrieve the defeats it had lately received, rapidly descended both banks of the Marne. Marmont, obliged to evacuate Sézanne, was driven by La Ferté-Gaucher on La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, whither Mortier also had retired before the advancing corps of Winzingerode. Already the fugitives were appearing at Meaux: Paris was in consternation; and Napoleon, alarmed at the danger of the capital, set out suddenly from Troyes on the morning of the 27th, with his Guards and cuirassiers, to accumulate his forces against his weakened but unconquerable antagonist.

7. While these military movements, every one of which seemed to involve the fate of Europe, were in progress, negotiations of the most important kind were going on between the allied powers and the French Emperor; and a new treaty among the former had been entered into, which again cemented and placed on a secure basis their recently somewhat disjointed alliance. It has been already mentioned that, in answer to the allied declaration from Frankfort, and the proposals for an accommodation, of which M. de St Aignan was the bearer, Napoleon had signified his readiness to treat; and after some delays on both sides, CHATILLON was fixed on as the place for the conferences, which was declared neutral ground, and the congress opened there on the 4th February. The great influence of England at this period in the alliance, might be seen

from the number of plenipotentiaries assigned to her in this memorable assembly; they were Lord Aberdeen, Lord Cathcart, and Sir Charles Stewart,* on the part of Great Britain; Count Razumoffski on that of Russia; Count Stadion for Austria; and Baron Humboldt on behalf of Prussia. Caulaincourt singly sustained the onerous duty of upholding, against such an array of talent and energy, the declining fortunes of Napoleon.

8. But though both parties professed an anxious desire to come to an accommodation, yet their views were so various that it was not difficult to foresee that, as in the preceding year at Prague, the congress would be little more than a form, and the sword must in reality determine the points in dispute between them. Both proceeded on the principle of making the terms which they demanded dependent on the aspect of military affairs; and both, in consequence, readily agreed to the congress continuing its labours amid the din of the surrounding conflict. Alexander from the outset upheld this principle, and strenuously maintained that the terms proposed at Frankfort should not be adhered to, after the great successes of the campaign, and the conquest of a third of France by the allied forces, had opened to them new prospects, which they could not have entertained before they crossed the Rhine. Napoleon, during the first alarm consequent on the battle of La Rothière, had given Caulaincourt full powers to sign anything which might prevent the occupation of Paris by the victorious Allies; but no sooner had victory returned to his standards at Montmirail and Champaubert, than he retracted, as already noticed, these concessions, enjoined his plenipotentiary to strive for delay, as his prospects were daily brightening, and directed him, above everything, to "sign nothing without his special authority."

9. The vast importance of the congress which was about to open, had early impressed upon both the Continental and British cabinets the necessity

* Now Marquis of Londonderry.

of sending a minister to take the principal direction of the negotiations, who might wield unfettered the whole powers of the government. General Pozzo di Borgo was accordingly sent to London in the close of 1813 to propose this; and the British government at once acquiesced in the propriety of the plan. Lord Harrowby was at first talked of; but the risks of delay in his case, from the necessity of corresponding with the foreign office in London, were such, that it was deemed indispensable to send the minister for foreign affairs himself. No one could have been found in any rank better qualified than Lord Castlereagh for the task. His high-bred manners, conciliatory disposition, and suavity of temper, were as much fitted to give him influence in the allied cabinets, as his clearness of intellectual vision, firmness of character, and indomitable moral courage, were calculated to add vigour and resolution to their councils. He received his instructions as to the terms to which he was to agree from a cabinet council, before leaving the British shores.

10. England had no demands either to recede from or augment since the war commenced. Her object throughout had been, not to force an unpopular dynasty on an unwilling people; not to wrest provinces or cities from France, in return for those which she had so liberally exacted from all the adjoining states; not even to make her indemnify Great Britain for any part of the enormous expenses to which she had been put during the war; but simply to provide *security for the future*; to establish a barrier alike against the revolutionary propagandism and military violence of her people; to compel her rulers and armies, whether republican or imperial, to withdraw within their own territories, and neither seek to disturb foreign nations by their principles, nor subdue them by their power. For the attainment of these objects, she had uniformly maintained that no security was so desirable, because none was so likely to be effectual, as the restoration of the former line of princes, with whom repose

was practicable, and to whom "conquest" was not, according to Napoleon's maxim, "essential to existence." But she had never regarded that as an indispensable preliminary to an accommodation, nor even put it forward on any occasion, from first to last, as the basis of a treaty with the existing rulers of France. In a word, England had nothing to do but to revert to and enforce those principles which she had submitted to the cabinet of St Petersburg before the contest began,* which she had announced to Napoleon when first seated, flushed with the triumph of Marengo, on the consular throne;† and which had formed the basis of the grand alliance projected by Mr Pitt in 1805,‡ shortly before the dreadful catastrophe of the Austerlitz campaign. She did so, accordingly; she demanded neither more nor less.

11. So memorable an instance of

* "The terms offered to France should be, the withdrawing her arms within the limits of the French territory, the abandoning her conquests, the rescinding any acts injurious to the sovereignty or rights of any other nation, and the giving, in some unequivocal manner, a pledge of her intention no longer to foment troubles or excite disturbances against foreign governments. In return for these stipulations, the different powers of Europe, who should be parties to this measure, might engage to abandon all measures or views of hostility against France, or interference in her internal affairs, and to maintain a correspondence and intercourse of amity with the existing powers of that country, with whom such a treaty may be concluded."
—LORD GRENVILLE, *Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the British Ambassador at St Petersburg*, 29th Dec. 1792; *ante*, chap. xiii. § 16.

† "The best and most natural pledge of the abandonment by France of those gigantic schemes of ambition, by which the very existence of society in the adjoining states has so long been menaced, would be the restoration of that line of princes, which for so many centuries maintained the French nation in prosperity at home, and consideration and respect abroad. Such an event would alone have removed, and will at any time remove, all obstacles in the way of negotiation or peace. It would confirm to France the unmolested enjoyment of its ancient territory: and it would give to all the other nations of Europe, in tranquillity and peace, that security which they are now compelled to seek by other means. But, desirable as such an event must be, both to France and the world, it is not to this mode exclusively that his Majesty limits the possibility of secure and solid pacification. His Majesty

constancy in adverse, and moderation in prosperous fortune, does not occur in the whole annals of mankind. We admire the magnanimity of the Romans, who refused to treat with Hannibal, when encamped within sight of the Capitol, till he had first evacuated the territories of the republic; we pay a just tribute to the heroism of Alexander, who surrendered the ancient capital of his empire to the flames, rather than permit it to be sullied by the presence of the spoiler; we acknowledge the glory which is shed over Spain, by the undaunted resolution of her Cortes never to negotiate with Napoleon, even when the remnant of her armies was shut up within the walls of Cadiz. But these were instances of constancy in adverse, not of moderation in prosperous fortune. To have maintained for twenty years a contest, often unaided, with an enemy pos-

makes no claim to prescribe to France what should be the form of her government, or in whose hands she shall vest the authority necessary for conducting the affairs of a great and powerful nation. He looks only to the security of his own dominions and those of his Allies, and to the general safety of Europe. Whenever he shall judge that such security can in any manner be attained, as resulting either from the position of the country from whose internal situation the danger has arisen, or from such other circumstances, of whatever nature, as may produce the same end, his Majesty will eagerly embrace the opportunity to concert with his allies the means of a general pacification."—LORD GRENVILLE to M. TALLEYRAND, January 5, 1800; *Parl. History*, xxxiv. 1199, 1201; and *ante*, chap. xxx. § 4.

‡ "The views of his Britannic Majesty and of the Emperor of Russia, in bringing about this alliance, are pure and disinterested. Their chief object, in regard to the countries which may be conquered from France, is to establish as much as possible their *ancient rights*, and to secure the wellbeing of their inhabitants; but in pursuing that object they must not lose sight of the general security of Europe, on which indeed that wellbeing is mainly dependent." Then follows a specification of the disposal to be made of the *conquests* of France, in the event of the alliance succeeding in wresting them from that power; without a syllable either as to despoiling her of any of the ancient provinces of the monarchy, or of interfering in the remotest degree with her internal government.
—MR PITT'S *note to the EMPEROR OF RUSSIA*, January 11, 1805; SCHÖELL, *Histoire des Traités de Paix*, vii. 59; and *ante*, chap. xxxix. § 40.

assing more than double her own resources; to have neither advanced beyond nor receded from her principles during that long period; to have put forward no pretensions in victory which she had not maintained in defeat; to have concluded peace with her inveterate enemy when her capital was in her power, and her Emperor dethroned, and exacted no conditions from the vanquished on which she had not offered to maintain peace before the contest commenced*—this is the glory of England, and of England alone.

12. Conformably to these principles, the instructions of Lord Castlereagh from the British cabinet contained no projects for the partition of any part of France as that monarchy existed in 1789, prior to the commencement of the Revolution, but the most ample provision for the establishment of barriers against its future irruption into Europe. The reduction of France to its ancient limits; the formation of a federative union in Germany, which might secure to the meanest of its states the protection of the whole; the re-establishment of the Swiss confederacy under the guarantee of the great powers; the restoration of the lesser states of Italy, intermediate between France and Austria, to a state of independence; the restoration of Spain and Portugal under their ancient sovereigns, and in their former extent; and lastly, the restitution of Holland to separate sovereignty, under the family of the Stadtholders, with such an addition of territory as might give it

the means of maintaining that blessing—such were the instructions of the English cabinet, in regard to the general restoration of the balance of power in Europe, in so far as France was concerned; and in these propositions all the allied powers concurred. With a view, however, to the especial security of England, two additional provisions were insisted upon, regarding which the British cabinet was inflexible. The first of these was, that no discussion even, derogatory to the British maritime rights, as settled by existing treaties, or the general maritime law of Europe, should be admitted; the second, that in the event of any new arrangements being deemed advisable for the future frontiers of France, they should not embrace Antwerp, Genoa, or Piedmont. The first was justly considered essential to the maritime security of England; the second, to the independence of the Italian states, on which side, as no general confederacy was contemplated, the greatest danger might in future be apprehended.

13. In these instructions, however, two important points were purposely left undecided; not because they were overlooked, or their importance not fully appreciated, but because their solution was involved in such difficulty, and was so dependent on future contingencies, that no directions previously given could possibly prove applicable to every case which might arise during the subsequent march of events. These were the restoration of the Bourbons, and the future destiny of Poland.

On the first of these points, the instructions contained no specific directions, because it was the intention of England, not less than of the other allied powers, not to interfere with the wishes and intentions of the French people. Lord Castlereagh, indeed, in conformity with the declared purpose of British diplomacy ever since the commencement of the war, made no concealment of his opinion, either in or out of parliament, that the best security for the peace of Europe would be found in the restoration of the dispossessed race of princes to the French

* "England will never consent that France should arrogate to herself the power of annulling at pleasure, under cover of a pretended natural right, of which she makes herself the sole judge, the political system of Europe, established by solemn treaties and guaranteed by the consent of all the powers. She will never see with indifference France make herself, either directly or indirectly, sovereign of the Low Countries, or general arbitress of Europe. If France is really desirous of maintaining peace and friendship with England, let her renounce her views of aggression and aggrandisement, and confine herself within her own territory, without insulting other governments, disturbing their tranquillity, or violating their rights."—LORD GRENVILLE to M. CHAUVELIN, the French Envoy, Feb. 5, 1793; *State Papers*, No. 1; *Ann. Reg.*; and *ante*, chap. ix. § 121.

throne;* and "the ancient race and the ancient territory," was often referred to by him, in private conversation, as offering the only combination which was likely to give lasting repose to the world. But it was as little his design, as it was that of the British cabinet, to advance these views as a preliminary to any, even the most lasting, accommodation.

14. Such a reaction, to have any likelihood of being durable, and to avoid exciting the immediate jealousy of Austria for the succession of Napoleon's son, could only be founded upon a movement in France itself, and such a manifestation of opinion within its limits, as might render it evident that no chance remained of a continuance of the crown in the Buonaparte family. The views of Alexander were entirely the same at this period, so far as regarded the government of France; and his able diplomatist, General Pozzo di Borgo, when sent to London to induce the British government to send Lord Castlereagh to the allied headquarters, thus expressed himself to the Count d'Artois, who pressed him to explain the ideas of the Czar on the subject of the Bourbon family:—"My lord, everything has its time; let us not perplex matters. To sovereigns you should never present complicated questions. It is with no small difficulty that they have been kept united in the grand object of overthrowing Buonaparte: as soon as that is done, and the imperial rule destroyed, the question of dynasty will present itself; and then your illustrious house will spontaneously occur to the thoughts of all."

15. But though entirely in unison

* "Every pacification would be incomplete if you did not re-establish on the throne of France the ancient family of the Bourbons: any peace with the man who had placed himself at the head of the French nation could have no other final result but to give to Europe fresh subjects of division and alarms—it could be neither secure nor durable. Nevertheless, it was impossible to refuse to negotiate with him, when invested with power, without doing violence to the opinion of Europe, and incurring the whole responsibility of the continuance of the war."

—LORD CASTLEREAGH'S *Speech in Parliament*, 29th June 1814; *Parl. Debates*, xxviii. 456.

on this momentous subject, the cabinets of England and Russia were far from being equally agreed as to another subject, which, it was foreseen, would speedily present itself for discussion on the overthrow of Napoleon—and that was the future destiny of Poland. That the old anarchical democracy of that country, with its stormy *comitia*, *liberum veto*, internal feuds, and external weakness, could not be restored, if the slightest regard was felt either for the general balance of power in Europe, or the welfare of that gallant but distracted people themselves, was evident to all. But what to do with Poland, amid the powerful and now victorious monarchies by which it was surrounded, all of whom, it might be foreseen, would be anxious to share its spoils, was not so apparent. In a private conversation with Sir Charles Stewart, at this period, the Emperor Alexander openly announced those views, in regard to the annexation of the grand-duchy of Warsaw to his dominions, which subsequently occasioned such difficulty at the congress of Vienna. He stated that his moral feelings, and every principle of justice and right, called upon him to use his power to restore such a constitution to Poland as would secure the happiness of so noble and great a people; that the abandonment of seven millions of his Lithuanian subjects for the attainment of such an object, if he had no guarantee for the advantage he was thence to derive for Russia, would be more than his imperial crown was worth; and that the only way of reconciling these objects was, by uniting the Lithuanian provinces with the grand-duchy of Warsaw, under such a constitutional administration as Russia might appoint. He communicated at the same time these views to Prince Metternich. Thus early did the habitual ambition of that great power show itself in the European congress; and so clearly, according to the usual course of human affairs, were future difficulty and embarrassment arising out of the very magnitude of present successes.

16. The instructions of Napoleon to

his plenipotentiary, Caulaincourt, were of a very different tenor, and such as sufficiently evinced the unlikelihood that the congress would terminate in any permanent accommodation. "It appears doubtful," said he, "whether the Allies really wish a peace; I desire it, but it must be solid and honourable. France, without its natural limits, without Ostend, without Antwerp, would be no longer on a level with the other powers of Europe. England, and all the other allied powers, have recognised at Frankfort the principle of giving France her natural boundaries. The conquests of France within the Rhine and the Alps can never compensate what Austria, Russia, and Prussia have acquired in Finland, in Poland, or what England has seized in India. The policy of England, the hatred of the Emperor of Russia, will carry away Austria. I have accepted the basis announced at Frankfort; but it is probable by this time the Allies have other ideas. Their negotiations are but a mask. The moment that they declared the negotiations subject to the influence of military events, it became impossible to foresee their probable issue. You must hear and observe everything. You must endeavour to discover the views of the Allies, and make me acquainted with them, day by day, in order that I may be in a situation to give you more precise instructions than I can give at present. To reduce France to its ancient limits is to degrade it. They are deceived if they suppose that the misfortunes of war will make the nation desire such a peace: there is not a French heart which would not feel its disgrace before the end of six months, and which would not make it an eternal subject of opprobrium to the government which should be base enough to sign it. Italy is untouched, the Viceroy has a fine army: in a few days I shall have assembled a force adequate to fight several battles, even before the arrival of the troops from Spain. If the nation second me, the enemy is marching to his ruin: if fortune betrays me, my part is taken—I will not retain the throne. I will neither de-

grade the nation nor myself, by subscribing debasing conditions. Try and discover what are Metternich's ideas. It is not the interest of Austria to push matters to extremity: yet a step, and the lead will escape her. In this state of affairs, there is nothing to prescribe to you. Confine yourself, in the first instance, to hearing everything, and inform me of what goes on. I am on the eve of joining the army; we shall be so near that scarcely any delay will occur in making me acquainted with the state of the negotiations.

17. When the views of the opposite parties were so widely at variance, it was not likely that the negotiations could lead to any result, or serve as more than a pretext to both parties for regulating the terms insisted on according to the aspect of military affairs. Yet were the conferences nearer leading to the conclusion of a peace, at their outset, than could possibly have been anticipated. The congress opened on the 3d of February at Chatillon; and from the great weight of Lord Castlereagh at the allied headquarters, the utmost union was soon brought to prevail between the leading ministers of the great powers. In the outset, Napoleon, by means of Caulaincourt, endeavoured to open a private communication with Prince Metternich; but the answer of that able statesman damped the hopes he had hitherto so confidently entertained of detaching Austria from the alliance, while, at the same time, it sufficiently proved that the cabinet of Vienna was anxious to retain him on the throne, if it could be done consistently with the liberties and security of the other states in Europe.*

18. Caulaincourt answered in terms * "I received yesterday evening the confidential letter of the 23d, which your Excellency has addressed to me. I have submitted it to the Emperor my master, and his imperial Majesty has resolved to make no use of its contents—it will remain for ever unknown: and I pray your Excellency to believe, that in the existing state of matters, any confidence reposed in our cabinet is beyond the reach of any abuse. I have a pleasure in making known to you this assurance, in a moment of such immense importance for Austria, France, and Europe. The conduct of my sovereign has been uniform and

dignified and melancholy, lamenting that Prince Metternich, instead of Count Stadion, was not the minister intrusted with the interests of Austria at the congress, to counterbalance the influence which Lord Castlereagh might exercise in its deliberations; and conjuring him, if he would avert the last calamities from the beloved daughter of his Emperor, to exert his efforts to bring about a fair and equitable peace.* Metternich replied: "M. Caulaincourt has conceived erroneous ideas concerning Lord Castlereagh. He is a man of a cool and just mind, without passions, who will never permit himself to be governed by coteries. It would be unfortunate if, in the outset of the congress, prejudices should be entertained against the individuals engaged in it. If Napoleon really wishes for peace, he will obtain it on reasonable terms." This separate and confidential correspondence between Metternich and Caulaincourt, unknown to the other members of the congress,

consistent. He has engaged in this war without hatred; he pursues it without resentment. The day that he gave his daughter to the prince who then governed Europe, he ceased to behold in him a personal enemy. The fate of war has since changed the attitude of all. If the Emperor Napoleon will listen in these moments to the voice of reason—if he will consent to seek his glory in the happiness of a great people, in renouncing his former ambitious policy—the Emperor will with pleasure revert to the feelings he entertained when he gave him the daughter of his heart; but if a fatal blindness shall render the Emperor Napoleon deaf to the unanimous voice of his people and of Europe, he will deplore the fate of his daughter, but not arrest his course."—*Confidential Letter, METTERNICH to CAULAINCOURT, 29th Jan. 1814; given in CAPEFIGURE, Hist. de l'Empire de Napoléon, x. 372, 373.*

* "The arrival of the allied troops at Paris would be the commencement of a series of changes which Austria assuredly would not be the last to regret. If the war is to terminate by our overthrow, has Austria nothing to regret in such a catastrophe? What profit is she to acquire, what glory to win, if we are overwhelmed by all the armies of Europe? You, my prince, have a boundless harvest of glory to reap; but it is to be gained only by your remaining the arbiter of events, and the only way in which you can do so is by an immediate peace."—*CAULAINCOURT to METTERNICH, 8th February 1814; CAPEFIGURE, x. 372.*

† "Sire! I am here at Chatillon, opposed to four diplomatists, counting the three Eng-

lish for one. They have all the same instructions, prepared by the secretaries of state of their respective courts. Their language has been dictated to them in advance; the declarations which they tender are all ready-made: they do not take a step, nor utter a word, which has not been preconcerted. They are desirous of a protocol, and I am not disinclined to it; so precious are the moments, and yet so great the hazard by a false step of ruining all. I set out with my hands bound: I have just received a letter full of alarms: and I now find myself invested with full powers. I am at once reined in and spurred on: I know not the cause of this extraordinary change."—*CAULAINCOURT to NAPOLEON, Feb. 6, 1814; FAIN, 289; CAPEFIGURE, x. 375, 376.* It is not surprising that Caulaincourt was at a loss to conceive the cause of this sudden change; for so inveterate was the habit of Napoleon of concealing the truth, and of dealing in falsehoods, even with his most confidential servants, that only two days before, in his letter to Caulaincourt, detailing the battle of La Rothière, he had said—"Schwarzenberg's report is a piece of folly: *there was no battle*: the Old Guard was not there; the Young Guard did not charge; a few pieces of cannon have been captured by a charge of horse; but the army was in march for the bridge of Lesmont when that event happened; and had he been two hours later, the enemy would not have forced us."—*NAPOLEON to CAULAINCOURT, Feb. 4, 1814—in HARDENBERG, xii. 332.* The words in italics are omitted in FAIN's quotation of this letter.—*See FAIN, 285; Pièces Just.*

19. The battle of La Rothière, and retreat of the French army from Troyes, produced a most important effect upon the views of Napoleon at the congress which had recently been opened. Justly alarmed for his capital, which seemed now to be menaced by an overwhelming force, and aware of the perfect unanimity which prevailed between the plenipotentiaries of the allied sovereigns, he at length gave Caulaincourt those full powers which he had so anxiously solicited;† and authorised

lish for one. They have all the same instructions, prepared by the secretaries of state of their respective courts. Their language has been dictated to them in advance; the declarations which they tender are all ready-made: they do not take a step, nor utter a word, which has not been preconcerted. They are desirous of a protocol, and I am not disinclined to it; so precious are the moments, and yet so great the hazard by a false step of ruining all. I set out with my hands bound: I have just received a letter full of alarms: and I now find myself invested with full powers. I am at once reined in and spurred on: I know not the cause of this extraordinary change."—*CAULAINCOURT to NAPOLEON, Feb. 6, 1814; FAIN, 289; CAPEFIGURE, x. 375, 376.* It is not surprising that Caulaincourt was at a loss to conceive the cause of this sudden change; for so inveterate was the habit of Napoleon of concealing the truth, and of dealing in falsehoods, even with his most confidential servants, that only two days before, in his letter to Caulaincourt, detailing the battle of La Rothière, he had said—"Schwarzenberg's report is a piece of folly: *there was no battle*: the Old Guard was not there; the Young Guard did not charge; a few pieces of cannon have been captured by a charge of horse; but the army was in march for the bridge of Lesmont when that event happened; and had he been two hours later, the enemy would not have forced us."—*NAPOLEON to CAULAINCOURT, Feb. 4, 1814—in HARDENBERG, xii. 332.* The words in italics are omitted in FAIN's quotation of this letter.—*See FAIN, 285; Pièces Just.*

him to sign anything that might appear necessary to avoid the risk of a battle, and save Paris from being taken.* It was not, however, without the utmost difficulty that this great concession was extorted from the Emperor; and the manner in which it occurred is singularly characteristic of the mingled firmness and exaltation of his mind. Caulaincourt had represented to him, by letter on 31st January, the absolute necessity of his receiving precise and positive instructions at the opening of the congress: "The fate of France," said he, "may depend on a peace or an armistice, which must be concluded in four days. In such circumstances I demand precise instructions, which may leave me at liberty to act."

20. When this letter was received, Maret, with tears in his eyes, entreated the Emperor to yield to necessity, and give the full powers which were urgently demanded. Instead of answering, Napoleon opened a volume of Montesquieu's works, containing the "*Grandeur et décadence des Romains*," which lay in his cabinet, and read the following passage:—"I know nothing more magnanimous than the resolution which a monarch took who has reigned in our times, (Louis XIV.), to bury himself under the ruins of his throne rather than accept conditions unworthy of a king. He had a mind too lofty to descend lower than his fortunes had sunk him; he knew well that courage may strengthen a crown, but infamy never." Maret with earnestness represented that nothing could be more

magnanimous than to sacrifice even his glory to the safety of the state, which would fall with him. "Well, be it so," replied the Emperor after a pause: "let Caulaincourt sign whatever is necessary to procure peace. I will bear the shame of it, but I will not dictate my own disgrace." In two hours after, the full powers were despatched.

21. The allied powers were unanimous in the terms which they proposed to France; and, after the preliminary formalities had been gone through, they were fully developed in a note lodged in their joint names, on the 7th February. They were to this effect:—"Considering the situation of Europe in respect to France, at the close of the successes obtained by their arms, the allied plenipotentiaries have orders to demand that France should be restricted to *her limits before the Revolution*, with the exception of subordinate arrangements for mutual convenience, and the restitution which England is ready to make for such concession. As a natural consequence of this, France must renounce all direct influence within the future limits of Germany, Italy, and Switzerland." Such was the consternation produced by the battle of La Rothière, that Caulaincourt, two days afterwards, wrote in reply: "I wish to know whether, by consenting to the terms which the Allies have proposed, that France shall be restricted to her ancient limits, I shall immediately obtain an armistice. If by such a sacrifice an armistice can instantly be obtained, I am ready to make it; nay, I shall be ready, on that supposition, to surrender immediately a portion of the fortified places which that sacrifice must make us ultimately relinquish."

22. To all appearance, therefore, the congress at this period was on the eve of producing a general peace; and an armistice, as the first step towards it, might hourly be expected. At this critical juncture, however, a letter was forwarded to the plenipotentiaries from the Emperor of Russia, requesting a suspension of these sittings for a few days, till he had an opportunity

* "I am authorised, duke, to make known to you, that the intention of the Emperor is, that you should consider yourself as invested with all the powers necessary, in these important circumstances, to take the part which you shall deem advisable to arrest the progress of the enemy. I have sent you a letter with the needful powers which you have solicited. At the moment when his Majesty is about to quit this city, he has enjoined me to despatch to you a second; and to make you aware, in express terms, that his Majesty gives you a *carte blanche* to conduct the negotiations to a happy issue—to save the capital, on which depend the last hopes of the nation, and avoid a battle."—MARET to CAULAINCOURT, *Troyes*, 5th Feb. 1814; *Fain*, 236, 237; *Pièces Just.*

of concerting with his Allies upon the terms to be demanded; and they were accordingly adjourned to the 17th. The fate of the world depended on this delay; for, when the conferences were resumed, events had occurred which rendered all accommodation impossible between the parties, and irrecoverably threw them back upon the decision of the sword. Napoleon, who had with great difficulty been brought to give full powers to Caulaincourt to treat after the disaster of La Rothière, no sooner saw the advantages which the ill-judged separation of the Grand Army from that of Silesia would give him, than he resolved to retract his concessions, and again trust all to the hazard of arms. He received intelligence of the terms demanded on the 9th at Nogent, when he was just on the eve of setting out on his expedition to Sézanne, which terminated in so disastrous a manner for Blücher. Perceiving the advantage which this movement was likely to afford, he broke out in the most vehement manner to Maret and Berthier, against the disgraceful nature of the terms which were demanded.

23. "What!" said he, with indescribable energy, "do you urge me to sign such a treaty, and trample under foot my coronation oath to preserve inviolate the territory of the republic? Disasters unheard-of might compel me to relinquish the conquests I myself have made: but to abandon those also made before me—to betray the trust made over to me with such confidence—to leave France, after so much blood has been shed and such victories gained, smaller than ever! Could I do it without treachery, without disgrace? You are fearful of a continuation of the war; and I am still more afraid of dangers yet more certain, which you do not perceive. If we renounce the frontier of the Rhine, it is not merely France which recedes, but Austria and Prussia which advance. France has need of peace; but such a one as they seek to impose upon it would be more dangerous than the most inveterate war. What would I be to the French

if I had signed their humiliation? What could I answer to the republicans of the Senate, when they came to ask me for the frontier of the Rhine? God preserve me from such affronts! Write to Caulaincourt, since you will have it so; but tell him that I reject the treaty. I prefer to run the greatest risks of war."

24. When such were the feelings of Napoleon on setting out upon his expedition against Blücher, it was not to be expected that his disposition would be rendered more pacific by his extraordinary and brilliant successes over that commander. No sooner, accordingly, was the first of these victories, that at Champaubert, gained, than Napoleon wrote to Caulaincourt that a brilliant change had taken place in his affairs; that new advantages were in preparation; and that the plenipotentiary of France was now entitled to assume a less humiliated attitude. Meanwhile the privy council at Paris, to whom the propositions of the Allies at Châtillon had been referred, unanimously reported that they should be agreed to. The Emperor, however, dazzled by the brilliancy of his victories over Blücher, wrote to the Emperor of Austria on the 17th, from Nançgis, that he was as anxious as ever for an accommodation; but that the advantages which he had now gained entitled him to demand less unfavourable terms; while to Caulaincourt he wrote, on the same day, that the extraordinary powers he had received were only intended to avoid a battle and save the capital; that now this danger no longer existed, and, consequently, the negotiation would resume its ordinary course of proceeding, and he was to sign nothing without the express authority of the Emperor.*

* "I gave you a *carte blanche* only to avoid a battle and save Paris, which was then the only hope of the nation. The battle has taken place; Providence has blessed our arms. I have made 30,000 or 40,000 prisoners, taken two hundred pieces of cannon, a great number of generals, and all this without almost a serious encounter. Yesterday I cut up the army of Prince Schwartzemberg, and I hope to destroy it before it has repassed the frontiers. Your attitude should continue the

25. This extraordinary change in his fortunes not only induced Napoleon to resume the powers to treat which he had conferred on Caulaincourt, but led to another step on his part, in the end attended with not less fatal effect upon his fortunes. During the first moments of alarm consequent on the battle of La Rothière and retreat from Troyes, he had written to Eugene Beauharnais to the effect, that the crisis had now become so violent in France that it was plain the contest would be decided there; that all subordinate considerations had thence become of no importance; and, therefore, that, after leaving garrisons in a few strongholds, he should immediately withdraw his whole forces across the Alps, and hasten to the decisive point on the banks of the Seine. This order, worthy of Napoleon's genius, and in strict conformity with his system of war, would have brought forty thousand experienced veterans on the rear of the Austrian Grand Army at the most critical period of the campaign, and, in all probability, prevented the advance to Paris and dethronement of the Emperor. But the successes over Blücher restored to such a degree his confidence in his good fortune, that he wrote to Eugene, the very night after the battle of Montmirail, forbidding him to retire, and assuring him that he was singly adequate to the defence of France. Nay, so far was he transported by the sanguine views

which he now entertained of his affairs, that he resumed his ideas of German conquest, and openly said to those around him, "I am nearer Munich than the Allies are to Paris." Thus the only effect of these successes was to restore the naturally ambitious and unbending tone of his character, to revive his projects of universal dominion, cause him to reject the throne of old France offered him by the Allies, and induce him to hazard all on the still doubtful issue of military operations.

26. But whatever confidence Napoleon himself might feel in the continued appeal to arms, the same feeling was far from being shared by the authorities, or more enlightened part of the inhabitants of Paris. When the couriers, indeed, succeeding one another, adorned with laurel, and announcing, with great exaggeration, the really marvellous victories of the Emperor, entered the courts of the Tuileries; and still more, when the long files of Russian and Prussian prisoners were conducted with all the pomp of war, and amidst the strains of triumphal music, along the Boulevards—the multitude loudly cheered the Emperor, and hope in the revival of his star was again awakened in many breasts. But amidst all this seeming congratulation, no return of real confidence was generally felt. Experience soon showed that victory attended only the arms of the Emperor in person; that while he was successful in one quarter, the enemy was pressing on in another; and it seemed next to impossible in the end, that the gallant band of veterans whom he commanded should not be worn out by the forces, always twice, often three times more numerous, by which they were surrounded. By the more intelligent and far-seeing of the community, even his victories were more dreaded than his defeats. The latter led to humiliation and peace, but the former tended to confidence and war; and it was already felt that a continuance of the contest, in the present exhausted state of France, was a greater evil than any possible calamities by which it might be terminated. In the Senate, in par-

same: you should do everything to procure peace; but my intention now is, that you should *sign nothing without my authority, because I alone know my own position.* Generally speaking, I will only consent to an honourable peace, such as on the basis proposed at Frankfort. My position is certainly better now than it was at that time. They could then set me at defiance; I had gained no advantages over them, and they were on the verge of my territories. Now I have gained immense advantages over them; so great indeed that a military career of twenty years, and no small celebrity, can exhibit no parallel to them; still I am ready to cease hostilities, and to allow the enemy to retire peaceably, if they will conclude peace on the basis of Frankfort." At the end of this letter these words were added in the handwriting of Napoleon:—"Sign nothing, sign nothing."
—NAPOLEON TO CAULAINCOURT, 17th Feb. 1814. FAIN, 297, 298; *Pièces Just.*

ticular, these ideas were violently fermenting ; every one distrusted his neighbour, because he was conscious of vacillation in himself ; all confidence in the stability of the imperial throne was at an end ; even the most prudent were beginning to speak aloud as to the Emperor being the sole obstacle to peace. Strange rumours were in circulation, to the effect that Joseph and the Empress proposed to make peace independently of the Emperor ; and the selfish and ambitious, anticipating an approaching convulsion, were looking about for the safest harbour in the storm.

27. But upon the allied powers the change in the diplomatic language of Caulaincourt, in obedience to the instructions he had received, coupled with the evident danger to the liberties of Europe from the returning fortune and increasing audacity of Napoleon, produced effects of the very highest importance. They now saw clearly that they had no chance, not merely of success, but of existence, except in perfect unanimity and the most vigorous warfare. The exulting expression of Napoleon, that he was nearer Munich than the Allies were to Paris,

* Alexander's opinions, recorded in this memorable state paper, are deserving of the most profound attention, as demonstrating both the admirable views which he entertained on the nature of the contest, and the high moral courage by which they were sustained :—" Victory having brought us to Frankfort, the Allies offered to France conditions of peace, which were *then* considered proportionate to the successes which they had obtained ; at that period these conditions might have been called the object of the war. I strongly opposed the proposal to negotiate then : not because I did not desire peace, but because I thought that time would offer us more favourable opportunities, when we had proved to the enemy our superiority over him. All are now convinced of the justice of my arguments ; for to it we are indebted for the incalculable difference between the terms offered at Frankfort and at Châtillon—that is, the restoration by France of territories without which Germany and Italy would be lost on the first offensive movement.

"The destruction of the enemy's political power does not constitute the grand aim of the efforts which it remains for us to make ; but it may become so, if the fortune of war, the example of Paris, and the evident inclination of the inhabitants of the provinces

had not been lost upon the assembled ministers ; and Lord Castlereagh, in particular, had been indefatigable in his efforts to convince the Austrian ministers that they would infallibly be the first object of the French Emperor's wrath, if his victorious legions should again cross the Rhine. In these views he was strongly supported by the Emperor Alexander, who, in a memoir submitted by him to the allied sovereigns on the 15th February, both manfully combated the desponding views then so general at the allied headquarters as to the critical nature of their situation, and developed the noblest and most luminous views as to the moral nature of the contest in which they were engaged, which had yet been uttered since the commencement of the war. Metternich cordially supported the same ideas ; the successes of Napoleon against Blücher had awakened all his former apprehensions of his power ; he now feared more for Vienna than for the fall of Marie Louise, and was desirous to prove the sincerity of his imperial master in the great objects of the alliance.* The result of their united efforts was the TREATY OF CHAUMONT—one of the most

of France, shall give the Allies the possibility of openly proclaiming it. I do not share the opinion of the Allies on the greater or less degree of importance attached by them to the *dethronement of Napoleon*, if that measure can be justified on grounds of wisdom. On the contrary, I should consider that event as the completion of the deliverance of Europe ; as the brightest example of justice and morality it is possible to display to the world ; and, in short, as the happiest event for France itself, whose internal condition can never be without influence on the tranquillity of her neighbours. Nobody is more convinced than I am of the inconstancy of fortune in war ; yet I do not reckon a partial failure, or even the loss of a battle, as a misfortune which should in one day deprive us of the fruit of our victories : and I am convinced that the skill of our generals, the valour of our troops, our superiority in cavalry, the reinforcements which are following us, and the force of public opinion, would never allow us to fall so low as some seem to apprehend. I am by no means adverse to continuing the negotiations at Châtillon, or giving Caulaincourt the explanations he desires regarding the future destiny of Europe, provided France would return to her old frontiers. As to the armistice which is requested in the letter to France Metternich, I conceive this

remarkable diplomatic acts of modern times, and which presented an impassable barrier to the ambition and efforts of France.

28. By this treaty it was stipulated that, in the event of Napoleon refusing the terms which had been offered him—viz. the reduction of France to the limits of the old monarchy, as they stood prior to the Revolution—the four allied powers, Austria, Prussia, Russia, and England, should each maintain one hundred and fifty thousand men in the field; that, to provide for their maintenance, Great Britain should pay an annual subsidy of five millions sterling, to be equally divided between the three continental powers, besides maintaining her own contingent complete from her own resources. It was stipulated, also, that each power should have a commissary at the headquarters of the different armies; that if any of the allied powers was attacked, each of the others should forthwith send to its assistance an army of sixty thousand men, including ten thousand horse, besides forwarding additional troops, if required; that if England chose to furnish her contingent, or any part of it, in foreign troops, she should pay annually twenty pounds sterling for every foot-soldier, and thirty for every horseman; that the trophies should be divided equally, and no peace made except by common consent; that none of the contracting parties should enter into engagements with other states, except of the same tenor: in fine, that this treaty should be in force for twenty years, and might be re-

proceeding of the French plenipotentiary to be contrary to the existing usages of negotiations, and the proposal to be advantageous only to the enemy. I am as much convinced as ever, that all probability is in favour of a successful issue, if the Allies keep to the views and obligations by which they have been hitherto guided with reference to their grand object, *the destruction of the enemy's armies*. With a good understanding among themselves, their success will be complete, and checks will be easily borne. I do not think that the time has yet arrived for us to stop short; and I trust that, as in former conjunctures, new events will show us when that time shall have arrived."—*Memoir to the Allied Sovereigns by the EMPEROR ALEXANDER*, 15th Feb. 1814; DANILEFSKY, 88, 90.

newed before the expiration of that period.

29. In addition to these public stipulations, several secret articles were inserted in the treaty, which eventually proved of the highest importance to the reconstruction of the states of Europe, after the deluge of the French Revolution had subsided. It was agreed, 1st, That Germany should be restored in the form of a federal union, embracing all the powers of which it was composed; that Switzerland should be independent, under the guarantee of the allied powers; Italy divided into independent states; Spain restored to Ferdinand VII., with its ancient limits; Holland enlarged in territory, and formed into a kingdom for the Prince of Orange. 2d, Power was reserved to Spain, Portugal, Sweden, and the Prince of Orange, to accede to the treaty. 3d, It was declared that, "considering the necessity which might exist, even after the conclusion of a definitive treaty of peace, to keep in the field, during a certain time, forces adequate to carry into effect the arrangements which the allied powers might agree upon for confirming the peace of Europe, the high contracting parties agree to concert among themselves the requisite provisions, not only regarding the necessity, but the importance and distribution of the forces requisite for this purpose; but under this limitation, that none of the powers should be obliged to keep such forces for this end on foot more than a year, without their express consent."

30. The conclusion of this treaty was a virtual dissolution of the congress of Châtillon; for it established so wide a difference between the views of Napoleon and those of the Allies, and confirmed the latter so strongly in their determination to contend to the uttermost for the reduction of France to its ancient limits, that, opposed as these views were to the firm resolution of Napoleon to hold out for the frontier of the Rhine, all prospect of an accommodation was at an end. The congress continued to sit for three weeks after, the allied powers firmly insisting on the relinquishment

by France of all its conquests since the Revolution; and Caulaincourt, under Napoleon's direction, constantly shifting his ground, and endeavouring to elude such rigorous conditions. It was not with his own good-will, however, that the French plenipotentiary insisted on these terms; for he saw as clearly as possible the immense risks which the Emperor was running by holding out for the frontier of the Rhine, and throwing all on the hazard of arms to obtain it; and represented in the most urgent, though respectful terms, the necessity of bending to the force of circumstances, and accepting the monarchy of Louis XIV. as the price of pacifying Europe.*

31. Napoleon, however, was inexorable: all the efforts of his diplomatist, after the plenary powers he had granted during the alarm after the battle of La Rothière had been recalled on the 17th of February, not only failed in convincing him of the necessity of descending from his ideas, but even of extracting from him any definite statement of the terms on

which he himself was willing to come to an accommodation. His genius, essentially Italian in this particular, signally displayed itself in the dexterity with which at this crisis he contrived to evade the repeated and earnest request of Caulaincourt for a categorical statement of the terms on which he was willing to come to an accommodation. He was evidently determined to cast all on the decision of the sword, and impressed with the belief that his genius, or his star, would extricate him from his present, as they had done from so many other perilous circumstances.† War, in consequence, recommenced with more activity than ever: the armistice of Lusigny, even in its application to the operations of the Grand Army, to which it was expressly confined, proved little more than a shadow; while by a singular contrast, characteristic of the manners of modern Europe, the most polished forms of courtesy were observed at the congress of Châtillon. The choicest wines of the Rhone and Champagne, the most delicate viands of Paris, passed as if by enchantment through the French lines, to enrich the diplomatic dinners, which succeeded each other without ceasing. The allied plenipotentiaries strove, by the most delicate attentions to M. Caulaincourt, to assuage, for a few moments at least, the overwhelming anxiety with which he was oppressed; and French ladies of rank and beauty added the charm

* "The question about to be decided is so important—it may have at the instant consequences so fatal, that I regard it as a paramount duty to recur again, even at the risk of displeasing your Majesty, to what I have already so frequently insisted on. There is no weakness, sire, in my opinion; but I see the dangers which menace France and the throne of your Majesty, and I conjure you to prevent them. We must make sacrifices; we must do so immediately: as at Prague, if we do not take care, the opportunity of doing so will escape us; the circumstances of this moment bear a closer resemblance to those which there occurred than your Majesty may be aware. At Prague peace was not concluded, and Austria declared against us, because we would not believe that the term fixed for the closing of the congress would be rigorously adhered to. Here the negotiations are on the eve of being broken off, because you cannot believe that a question of such immense importance may depend on such or such an answer which we may make before a certain day. The more I consider what has passed, the more I am convinced that, if we do not go into the *contre-projets* demanded, but insist upon modifications on the basis of Frankfort, all is closed. I venture to say, because I feel, that neither the glory of your Majesty nor the power of France depend on the possession of Antwerp, or any other point of our new frontiers."—CAULAINCOURT TO NAPOLEON, *Châtillon*, March 6, 1814. FAIN, 801, 802; *Pièces Just.*

† "During these negotiations (at Châtillon) I cannot conceive why I have not become mad. The time of illusions was past. The reality was devouring; and to my letters I only received evasive answers, when it would have been necessary to treat at any price. The future remained to us; at present nothing is left but a tomb. My letters were only a faint copy of what I said to the Emperor in our private interviews. I insisted that he should give me his sincere ultimatum, in order that I might be in a position to come to a decisive conclusion with the allied plenipotentiaries, who had certainly received positive instructions. I must speak the truth, for this is become a matter of history: the Emperor never answered categorically this demand. With a marvellous address he contrived to retain the secret of his inmost thoughts; this manner is one of the salient traits of his nature."—*Souvenirs de CAULAINCOURT*, I. 302, 320, 380.

of female fascination to the assembly of hostile diplomatists, intent on the overthrow of their country.

32. While this important negotiation was going on at Châtillon, military operations of the most active kind had been resumed between Napoleon in person and the army of Silesia, which had now, under the direction of Blücher, advanced beyond La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, and almost to Meaux, in the direction of Paris. Napoleon was no sooner informed of the danger which menaced the capital than he set out, as already mentioned [*ante*, Chap. LXXXVI. § 6], at daybreak on the morning of the 27th February, from Troyes, for Arcis-sur-Aube and Sézanne, to follow on the traces of the Prussian marshal. Blücher on the 25th had crossed the Aube at Anglure, and on the two following days advanced, driving Marmont before him, to La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, where the French marshal effected his junction with Mortier, who had retired from the neighbourhood of Soissons before the approaching corps of Winzingerode and Bulow, now moving forward to co-operate with the army of Silesia, in conformity with the plan agreed on at Bar-sur-Aube on the 25th [*ante*, Chap. LXXXVI. § 5]. The light troops of the Russians were directed by Blücher to make an attack on Meaux; while, to deceive the enemy as to his real intentions, the Prussians were ordered to repair the bridges over the Marne, at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, which had been burned by the French, and, crossing over, to menace the French marshal on that side.

33. In pursuance of these orders, Sacken's light troops took possession, with little resistance, of that part of Meaux which is situated on the left bank of the Marne; but, at the very time that he was making preparations to force his passage across to that part of the town which is on the right bank, Marmont and Mortier, who were too experienced to be diverted from the decisive point of the Paris road by the feint at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, arrived in breathless haste, and instantly manning the old walls, which had been

deserted by the national guard who formed the garrison of the town, made every preparation for a vigorous defence. Their opportune arrival obliged Sacken to defer his attack till the following morning; and in the course of the night Blücher received intelligence from Tattenborn that the French Emperor in person was marching on his rear by Sézanne. He immediately drew off his troops, and moved next day in the direction of Soissons, with a view to unite with Winzingerode and Bulow, and give battle to Napoleon. It was full time he should be interrupted in his career, for three days more would have brought him to the gates of the capital, where the roar of Sacken's cannon, during the attack on Meaux, was distinctly heard.

34. The departure of Napoleon from Troyes was soon made known to the outposts of the grand allied army, by the languor and inactivity with which their rear-guard was pursued. This, coupled with the intelligence which Schwartzberg received at the same time, of the advance of Blücher towards the Marne, induced him, at the earnest request of the King of Prussia, who was justly alarmed for that general when the whole weight of Napoleon was directed against him, to resume the offensive on the great road from Troyes to Chaumont. With this view, early on the morning of the 27th, the corps of Wrede and Wittgenstein, mustering about thirty-five thousand sabres and bayonets, were drawn up opposite to Bar-sur-Aube on the road leading to Chaumont. Oudinot commanded the French in that quarter, who, though consisting nominally of two corps of infantry and two of cavalry, could not bring above seventeen thousand men into the field; so that the Allies were more than two to one. The French, nevertheless, made a gallant defence. They were skilfully posted across several ravines, which descend from Bar towards the Aube, in such a manner that they could be reached only along the plateaus which lay between them, where, the ground being narrow, the superiority of the attacking force was not likely to be so

severely felt. Wittgenstein's plan was to attack the enemy in front with Gortschakoff's corps, while Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, supported by Pahlen's horse, menaced their flank. The French, however, commenced the action by storming the height in front of Ailleville, which formed the connecting point between their front and flank attack. Upon this, Wittgenstein ordered up Gortschakoff's corps, supported by Pahlen's cuirassiers, to retake that important position. The cavalry were repulsed; but, after a severe struggle, the Russian infantry succeeded in regaining the height. Upon this turning point being gained, a general attack along the whole allied line took place. Meanwhile Pahlen's cuirassiers had been detached towards Sévigny, in order to threaten the enemy's communications, and thus Gortschakoff's men were exposed, without adequate support, to the furious charge of Kellerman's dragoons. These splendid troops, just arrived from Spain, speedily routed the Russian hussars, and threw their whole centre into such disorder, that Wittgenstein could only avert total defeat by concentrating his artillery at the menaced point. He consequently sent orders, in haste, to Pahlen to remeasure his steps, and bring up his heavy squadrons to the support of the wavering part of the line.

35. Highly excited by this brilliant success, the veteran Peninsular squadrons threw themselves, with the utmost gallantry, on the Russian batteries in the centre; but the experienced gunners allowed them to approach within a hundred paces, and then opened such a tremendous point-blank discharge of grape, that four hundred horsemen were in a few minutes stretched on the plain, and the remainder recoiled in disorder. At the same time Schwartzberg, who had come up in person, ordered two brigades of cavalry and one of infantry from Wrede's corps to support the centre; and conceiving that part of the line now adequately secured, sent orders to Pahlen to wheel about a second time and resume his original march to Sévigny and Dolancourt, to

threaten the enemy's left flank. Shortly after, Wrede, who had now come into action, commenced a vigorous attack on Bar-sur-Aube itself, on the French right, so that both their flanks were menaced. These movements of necessity compelled Oudinot to retire; but, to gain time to effect his retreat in order, his troops made the most vigorous resistance at all points, especially at Bar, which was the theatre of a most sanguinary conflict. Pahlen's brilliant dragoons, who had been kept marching and counter-marching all day without taking any part in the combat, did not arrive in time to molest the passage of the Aube at Dolancourt; and thus the French effected their retreat before nightfall without being deprived of either guns or standards; but they sustained a loss of three thousand men, of whom five hundred were prisoners. The allied loss was about two thousand four hundred men; but they gained Bar-sur-Aube, and, what was of far more consequence, restored the credit and spirit of the Grand Army, and arrested a retreat to the Vosges mountains, or possibly to the Rhine.

36. Count Wittgenstein was severely wounded, Prince Schwartzberg slightly, in this action; and the former, being obliged to retire for a season from active operations, was succeeded in the command of his corps by General Raeffakoi. Except for his loss, the Russian service would have had no cause to lament any circumstance which brought the indomitable hero of Smolensko [*ante*, Chap. LXXII. § 42] more prominently forward; but the wound which compelled Wittgenstein to withdraw was a serious injury to the allied cause, and a great misfortune to himself; for it occurred at the most critical period of the contest, and four weeks more would have shown the saviour of St Petersburg the dome of the Invalides. Though the jealousy of the Russian troops at a foreigner, and the ill success which attended his arms when acting as generalissimo at Lützen, prevented his being invested with the supreme command, in the later stages of the war, he throughout

bore a distinguished part in its achievements, and contributed much by the boldness of his advice to sustain, when it was greatly required, the vigour of the allied councils.

37. Daring, impetuous, often inconsiderate, he was the Marcellus, if Barclay de Tolly was the Fabius, of the Russian army. Like Blücher, he was ever urgent to advance, and uniformly supported the most daring measures; in action, his buoyant courage never failed to bring him into the foremost ranks, and his frequent wounds attest how fearlessly he shared the dangers of the meanest soldiers. He could not be said to be a great master of strategy, and his want of circumspection in adequately supporting his advanced columns frequently exposed his troops to serious reverses, of which the combat at Nangis had recently afforded an example [*ante*, Chap. LXXXV. § 76]; yet was this very peculiarity of his temperament, directing, as he did, troops so firm and resolute as the Russians, often of the most essential service to his country, and the general cause of Europe. His obstinate resistance and unconquerable vigour on the Dwina, unquestionably saved St Petersburg during the first part of the campaign of 1812; his daring advance against Napoleon's right at Lützen all but exposed that great conqueror to total defeat; and his able retreat at Bautzen snatched complete victory from his grasp when it was almost already seized. The alacrity and fidelity with which, in subordinate situations, he subsequently conducted his own corps, both in 1813 and 1814, proved that his patriotism was superior to all unworthy considerations of jealousy; while his last achievement in the campaign of Bar-sur-Aube, for which he was made a field-marshal, had the most important effect in reviving the spirit of the Grand Army, and restoring vigour and unanimity to the allied councils.

38. Although, however, the successful result of this battle sufficiently proved that Napoleon, with the main body of his army, was absent, and that a thin curtain of troops alone stood in

front of the Grand Army, yet it was impossible at first to infuse an adequate degree of resolution into its direction. The retiring columns of Oudinot were hardly at all pursued; Prince Schwartzberg assigned as a reason, that he could not move forward till he was informed of the direction and tendency of Macdonald's corps, which was advancing near Vandœuvre. This corps, however, proved so weak that it was met and repulsed by the cavalry alone of Count Pahlen and Prince Eugene of Würtemberg; and intelligence having been received on the 1st March that Napoleon, with the main body of his forces, was at Arcis-sur-Aube on the preceding day, following fast on Blücher's traces, it became evident that the plan of the campaign agreed on at Bar-sur-Aube, on the 25th February, could no longer be adhered to, and he was in a manner forced into more vigorous operations. On the same day that this information was received from the army of Silesia, a grand reconnoissance with the cavalry took place towards Vandœuvre, and it was ascertained that the enemy were in force in no direction. Orders were at length given for a general advance. Headquarters were, on the day following, moved to Bar-sur-Aube; the retreat was stopped at all points, and preparations were made for attacking the enemy immediately, in the position which he occupied along the Barse, and, if possible, driving him from Troyes. Oudinot and Macdonald, the latter of whom had come up from La Verte-sur-Aube, had now collected all their forces in that position, and did not appear disposed to relinquish it without a combat.

39. The attack took place on the 3d, and was maintained with great vigour at all points. The united French corps, which were all under the command of Marshal Macdonald, mustered thirty-five thousand combatants, of which nearly nine thousand were cavalry. The great preponderance of this arm, and the desperate use the French generals had made of it at Bar-sur-Aube, rendered the Allies cautious in their movements; but their great su-

periority of number made ultimate success a matter of certainty, for they had already sixty thousand men in the field, without bringing up the imperial guards or reserves from the neighbourhood of Chaumont. The position which the French marshal had chosen, strong, and on the elevated plateau of Laubressel, was inaccessible in front and flank in ordinary times, by reason of the morasses with which it was surrounded; but it was by no means equally defensible during the hard frost which had for nearly two months prevailed over all Europe at that time, and which rendered the deepest marshes as easy of crossing as the smoothest plain. Taking advantage of this circumstance, Schwartzenberg directed Wrede to attack the position in front by the great road to Vandœuvre, which passed through it; while Wittgenstein's corps, now under Gortschakoff, second in command to Raefskoi, assailed it on its left by the plateau of Laubressel, which was to be turned by Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, at the same time.

40. At three o'clock the signal was given by the discharge of two guns from Wrede's corps, and the troops all advanced to the attack. Hardly were the first rounds of artillery fired, when, seeing that Prince Eugene's movement was rapidly turning them, the French on the extreme left began to retreat. The Russian cuirassiers under Pahlen instantly dashed forward, and broke two battalions which had not time to form square; and, passing on, attacked a park of artillery which was just entering Troyes, dispersed the drivers, and took the greater part of the guns. General Gerard, who lay sick among the carriages, was only saved from being made prisoner by the intrepidity of a few sappers, who came up to his rescue. Upon this, Count St Germain's dragoons were brought forward, and these admirable troops, charging home, not only checked Pahlen's men, already blown by their success, but retook several of the guns. Soon, however, the deep and heavy masses of the allied infantry arrived in line, each column preceded by a formidable ar-

ray of artillery. Gerard, who commanded the centre, seeing he was certain of being turned if he remained where he was, soon gave orders for a retreat, and the plateau of Laubressel, the key of the position, was abandoned. Schwartzenberg, perceiving that the retreat was commencing, ordered Wrede with his Bavarians to storm the bridge of La Guilloitière over the Barse, which was done in the most brilliant style, and rendered the position accessible in front at all points. The French now retreated on all sides, and after sustaining, with various success, repeated charges of the allied horse, withdrew wholly into Troyes, which they abandoned next day by capitulation, having in this action suffered a loss of nine pieces of cannon and two thousand men, of whom fifteen hundred were made prisoners; while the Allies had not to lament the loss, in all, of more than eight hundred.

41. Everything now conspired to recommend vigorous operations to the Grand Army. Its credit was restored, and its spirit revived, by the successful issue of the two last actions; its retreat had been arrested, and turned into a victorious advance; the ancient capital of Champagne had again fallen into its hands; Napoleon was absent, and the troops opposed to it, dejected and downcast, were hardly a third of its own numerical amount. By simply advancing against an enemy in no condition to oppose any resistance to such an operation, Paris would be menaced, the pressure on Blücher removed, the circle of operations narrowed, and the Emperor at length compelled to fight for his dominions and crown, against the united force of both armies, under the very walls of his capital. To complete the reasons for vigorous hostilities, the negotiations for an armistice at Lusigny were broken off on the very day on which Troyes was retaken, Count Flahault's propositions on that subject being deemed wholly inadmissible by the allied powers. The Emperor Alexander and Lord Castlereagh were indefatigable in their efforts, after this period, to rouse the Austrian commander-in-chief to more ac-

tive operations, so foudly called for, not more by the obvious advantage to be gained, than by the not less obvious danger to the army of Silesia to be averted by immediately commencing them.* But all their efforts were in vain; for the next fortnight, big, as we shall immediately see, with the most important events between the Aisne and the Marne, the Grand Army—fully eighty thousand strong, even after the two corps sent to Lyons had been deducted, flushed with victory, within six days' march of the capital, with only thirty thousand enemies in its front—remained in a state of almost total inaction, leaving the destinies of Europe to hang on the swords, comparatively equally balanced, of Napoleon and Marshal Blücher!

42. On the 5th, indeed, headquarters were advanced to Troyes; the French marshals retired, as Napoleon had done a month before, behind the Seine, and were posted at Bray, Nogent, and Monttereau, with the headquarters at Provins; the victorious corps of Wrede, Prince Eugene of Wirtemberg, and Wittgenstein, now under Raefskoi, were advanced to Sens, and Pont-sur-Yonne; and the Russian reserves were brought up from Chaumont to the neighbourhood of Montiérender. But in these positions they were kept wholly inactive till the 13th, when, in consequence of the great successes of the army of Silesia, a forward movement, though

* "The Emperor considers that the advance of the Grand Army to Sens is drawing us away from the enemy, and that it is therefore indispensable to direct all our forces to the right towards Arcis, between that town and Vitry; and, at all events, to reinforce them with the reserves, which should be ordered to move forward."—ALEXANDER to SCHWARTZENBERG, 8th March 1814. "In consequence of intelligence received from Field-Marshal Blücher, the Emperor considers it indispensable to begin to move by the right, between Arcis-sur-Aube and Vitry."—ALEXANDER to SCHWARTZENBERG, 11th March 1814.—"I hasten to communicate to your Highness the reports received from Count St Priest. His Majesty has charged me to inform you that, according to his opinion, it is now more necessary than ever to act on the offensive. Henceforth your hands will be completely unbound, and you may act according to military calculation."—VOLKONSKY, *Alexander's Aide-de-camp*, to SCHWARTZENBERG, 12th March 1814; DANILEFSKY, 194, 195.

with the usual caution of Schwartzenberg, was attempted. But the Austrian generalissimo is not responsible for this, on military principles, inexplicable delay. Diplomacy here, as so often during the war, restrained the soldiers' arms; and the cabinet of Vienna, distracted between its desire to reduce France to the frontiers of 1792, and yet to preserve the throne for the grandson of the Emperor Francis, still clung to the hope that, by delaying to bring matters to extremities, Napoleon might be brought to see his situation in its true light, and conclude a peace on such terms as might still leave his dynasty on the throne.

43. Very different, however, was the system of warfare which was pursued on the banks of the Aisne, where Blücher, with the iron bands of the army of Silesia, singly withstood the whole weight of Napoleon's power. No sooner did the veteran marshal receive intelligence of the Emperor's approach, than, with all imaginable expedition, he gathered together his forces, which now amounted to fifty-five thousand men, and forthwith commenced his march across the Marne, at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, the bridges of which he broke down, in the direction of Soissons. Napoleon, counting the moments in his impatience, urged on the advance of his troops from La Ferté-Gaucher; the soldiers, in high spirits and burning with ardour, gallantly seconded his efforts, and fifty thousand men, pressing on with ceaseless march, promised soon to bring on a fearful collision with the enemy. But it was too late. As the leading columns reached the heights above La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, and the valley of the Marne lay at their feet, they beheld the rear-guard of the army of Silesia vanishing in the distance on the other side of the Marne, the whole bridges of which were broken down. It was necessary to restore them before the pursuit could be renewed, and this required four-and-twenty hours. Headquarters, therefore, were established at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, and Napoleon in person repaired the following morning to the spot, to hasten the re-

construction of the bridges, at which the engineers laboured with such assiduity that the troops began to cross over on the evening of the same day. Meanwhile couriers were despatched to Paris to tranquillise the inhabitants, whom the cannonade at Meaux had thrown into the utmost consternation, with the joyful intelligence of the retreat of the Allies; while Blücher, who proposed to fight at Oulchy, on the right bank of the Ourcq, and had given orders to Winzingerode and Bülow to meet him there for that purpose, toiled on amidst dreadful rains, and by deep cross roads rendered almost impassable by the sudden breaking up of the frost, to gain the appointed place of rendezvous.

44. It was not so easy a matter as the Prussian general supposed, for Bülow and Winzingerode to get across to Oulchy; for the only bridge over the Aisne, at this time flooded by the thaw, was at Soissons, and it was a fortified town held by a considerable French garrison. The justice of the *coup-d'œil* which had made Chernicheff some weeks before select it as the scene of his brilliant assault, was now manifest; but the whole fruits of that success had been lost, and the town regained to the enemy, from the retreat consequent on the disasters of Blücher's army. Bülow and Winzingerode, in obedience to the orders sent them from Bar-sur-Aube on the 25th, had united on the 2d near Soissons, on the opposite side of the river; their forces amounted to fifty thousand veterans, so that they would double the numerical strength of the army of Silesia. But Soissons held out, notwithstanding repeated summonses to surrender; the strength of its works, which had been considerably increased since Chernicheff's extraordinary *coup-de-main*, seemed to defy an immediate assault; and yet the situation of Blücher, on the opposite bank, with Marmont and Mortier pressing on his rear—with the former of whom his rear-guard had that day a severe encounter, which cost him five hundred men—and Napoleon threatening his flank, was extremely perilous. In this emergency the Prussian marshal sent for-

ward the pontoon train to Busancy on the Aisne, with the most experienced engineers in his army, to select points for throwing bridges across; but to attempt such an operation during the darkness of a winter night, with fifty thousand French, led by Napoleon, thundering in pursuit, was obviously attended with no common hazard.

45. In this dilemma, the Prussian marshal was delivered from his difficulties in a way so remarkable that it almost savoured of the marvellous. There were fifteen hundred Poles in Soissons, the brave but now inconsiderable remnant of the followers of Poniatowski, under the command of General Moreau.* They had received special orders from Napoleon to defend the place to the last drop of their blood, as the blocking up that issue to the army of Silesia out of the country between the Marne and the Aisne, formed a part of the able plan which he had conceived for its destruction. The allied generals had resolved to attempt to storm the place on the following morning; but during the night, under the pretence of purchasing some wine for the use of the generals, they sent an officer into the town to propose a capitulation. This skilful diplomatist, Colonel Lowenstow, having with some difficulty, and not without sustaining great danger from the sentries, who repeatedly fired upon him, contrived to make his way into the fortress, so worked upon the fears of the governor, by representing that two strong corps were prepared to assault the place on the following morning, and would infallibly put the whole garrison to the sword, that he prevailed on that officer and the council of war, whom he found assembled, to capitulate. Moreau proposed that the garrison should be allowed to take the guns, six in number, with them; and, after some feigned opposition on the part of Lowenstow, this was admitted. Winzingerode gladly acceded to the proposed terms; and it having been observed by some one present, that it was unusual to give an enemy,

* Not of course the great general of the same name, who fell at Dresden.

voluntarily evacuating a fortress, more than two guns, Woronzoff justly remarked—"that in the present circumstances, the surrender of Soissons was of such importance, that it would be even allowable to make the French commandant a present of some of our own guns, on the single condition of his evacuating the fortress on the instant." The capitulation was accordingly agreed to, and Woronzoff in person led his troops, immediately after, at noon on the 8d, to take possession of the city gates.

46. Napoleon expressed, as well he might, the utmost indignation at this disgraceful capitulation; the moment he received intelligence of it, he directed the governor, Moreau, to be forthwith delivered over to a military commission. The importance of the advantage thus gained to the Allies was soon apparent; for hardly were the city gates in possession of the Russians, when the sound of Marmont's and Mortier's cannon was heard thundering on Blücher's rear-guard; and soon after the heads of his columns, weary and jaded, and in great confusion, began to arrive, and they defiled without intermission through the fortress all night. It may fairly be concluded, therefore, that the opportune surrender of Soissons saved the Prussian marshal, if not from total defeat, which the distance at which the great body of Napoleon's forces still were rendered improbable, at least from most serious embarrassment and loss in crossing the river. On the day following, the whole army passed over in safety, and effected its junction with Bulow and Winzingerode's men, on the summit of the plateau overlooking Soissons, on the road to Laon. The veterans of the Silesian army, almost worn out with two months' incessant marching and six weeks of active hostilities, with hardly any shoes on their feet, tattered greatcoats on their backs, and almost empty caissons, presented a striking contrast to the splendid array, untarnished uniforms, and well-replenished artillery and baggage wagons of Bernadotte's corps. This important junction raised the strength

of the united army to a hundred thousand men, of whom twenty-four thousand were admirable horse; and infantry and cavalry alike were tried veteran troops, well known in the preceding campaign on the Elbe. Blücher resolved no longer to retreat, but to give battle on the summit of the elevated plateaus which lie between the Aisne and the Serre, adjacent to the highway from Soissons to Laon.

47. And now an event occurred which throws an important light on the moral government of the world, and illustrates the inexpediency, even for present interests, of those deviations from the rules of justice and humanity, which it is the highest glory of civilisation to have in general introduced into the ruthless code of war. Irritated at the escape of the army of Silesia from the well-laid scheme which he had devised for its destruction, and anxious to engage the masses of the people, hitherto passive and inert in the midst of the hostile armies, in a guerilla warfare on the flanks and rear of the invaders, Napoleon issued two proclamations from Fismes: by the first of which he not only authorised, but enjoined, every Frenchman to take up arms, and fall on the flanks and rear of the invading armies; while, by the second, the penalties of treason were denounced against every mayor or public functionary who should not stimulate, to the utmost of his power, the prescribed insurrectionary movements on the part of the people.* Thus was Napoleon himself driven by a just retribution, and the consequences of the atrocious system

* "All the French citizens are not only authorised to take up arms, but required to do so; to sound the tocsin as soon as they hear the cannon of our troops approaching them; to assemble together, scour the woods, break down the bridges, block up the roads, and fall on the flanks and rear of the enemy. Every French citizen taken by the enemy, who shall be put to death, shall be forthwith avenged, by the shooting of a prisoner from the enemy.—NAPOLÉON." "All the mayors, public functionaries, and inhabitants, who, instead of stimulating the patriotic ardour of the people, shall strive to cool them, and dissuade them from all the measures of a legitimate defence, shall be considered as traitors, and treated as such."—NAPOLÉON, 5th March 1814. *Moniteur*, March 6, 1814; and GOLD-SMITH'S *Recueil*, vi. 645.

of universal invasion and systematic oppression which the Revolutionary armies had so long pursued, to adopt the very same measures of defence which he had so often denounced in his enemies, and for obeying which he had, in sullen revenge, shed so much noble and heroic blood.

48. The guerilla warfare to which he now called the French, and which led to severe and sanguinary proclamations, in reprisal, by the allied generals, was no other than the very system for pursuing which he had, in the outset of his career, shot the magistrates and principal citizens of Pavia in cold blood, and given up that beautiful city to pillage [*ante*, Chap. XX. § 85]; and to repress which he had sanctioned the bloody proclamations of Soult and Augereau, denouncing the punishment of death against every Spanish peasant found in arms in defence of his country; and the still more infamous decree of Bessières, affixing the same penalty, not only to the people not soldiers taken in arms, but "against the *fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, children, and nephews*, of all individuals who have quitted their domiciles, and do not inhabit the villages occupied by the French." Impelled by stern necessity, the mighty conqueror was now obliged to sign with his own hand the condemnation of his previous cruelty; to canonise the memory of the many brave men whom he had doomed to death for doing what he now enjoined; to expose to similar suffering the people who had been the instruments and sharers in his oppression. Providence has a clear mode of dealing with the sins of men, which is, to leave them to the consequences of their own iniquities.

49. Determined to come to blows with the army of Silesia, notwithstanding the great accession of strength which it had just received, in the hopes that he might disable it, for a time at least, from resuming the offensive, while he turned his strength against the vast but unwieldy masses of the Grand Army, Napoleon gave orders for a general advance. With this view, General Corbineau, with a considerable body,

was detached in the night of the 4th from Fismes to Rheims, of which he took possession without resistance on the day following; and on the same day the advanced guard was pushed on to Bery-au-Bac, where the cross road from Rheims to Laon passes the Aisne, by a bridge recently constructed. The whole army was immediately moved in that direction; and Nansouty, having fallen in with the rear-guard of the enemy, drove it back to Corbeny with some loss. As soon as the passage of the Aisne was fully effected, couriers were despatched to Mezières, Verdun, and Metz, with instructions to stimulate the authorities to rouse the peasantry; but though the latter in many places showed a disposition to rise in obedience to the Emperor's proclamations, and not unfrequently fell upon the detached parties of the Allies with hardly any leaders, yet the former, foreseeing his approaching end, hardly ever made the slightest attempt either to direct or encourage their efforts. Meanwhile the army approached Laon, by the road from Bery-au-Bac, to the ground where Marshal Blücher had taken post on the plateau of CRAONE, on the narrow neck of land which extends from the road from Soissons to Laon, to which the enemy were now advancing from Bery-au-Bac to the same town.

50. The position thus chosen was a plateau nearly a mile and a half long, but not half a mile broad, bounded on either flank by steep slopes leading down to the ravines of Foulon and Ailles, the sides of which, difficult of ascent to infantry, were wholly impracticable for cavalry or artillery. The river Lette flowed nearly in a straight line, in the bottom of the ravine to the north; at the distance of a mile from the southern edge of the plateau, the Aisne ran in a deep and nearly parallel channel, from east to west; but the immediate declivities of the position were drained by a multitude of feeders, which flowed rapidly down at right angles to the central bed of these two streams. A cross gully of no great depth, but a most formidable obstacle on a field of battle, extended

at right angles to the ravines, along the front of that part of the plateau which Woronzoff chose for his first stand; and two others of irregular forms, running each halfway across it, afforded, like so many bastions and ditches, positions of considerable strength in rear. The upper part of the hollows on either side was filled with woods; that of Vauciere lying to the north, and the Bois de Blanc Sablon to the south, neither of which was pervious to cavalry or artillery. The neck of the plateau, and the strength of the position, was across it from Ailles to Paissey, and at that point it was little more than five hundred yards broad—a narrow space for a battle to be fought on which the fate of France, and perhaps of Europe, would depend.

51. It was far from being his whole army, however, which Blücher had assembled in this strong position. His situation was full of difficulty, especially considering the sudden and desperate strokes which his antagonist was wont to deliver, the admirable quality of the troops at his command, and the variety of points he himself was called on to defend. It was necessary, in case of disaster, and for the sake of his communications, to cover Laon, the bulwark of the roads to the Netherlands: to defend the central position at Craonne, and, at the same time, to keep possession of the important fortress of Soissons, commanding the principal passage of the Aisne, and the great road to Paris, the object of all his efforts. This last stronghold, forming the extreme right of his line, was now threatened with immediate assault by Marmont and Mortier, to whom Napoleon had given peremptory orders instantly to carry it at all hazards. To provide at once for these different objects, and at the same time carry into effect his intention of giving battle to the French Emperor, the following dispositions were made by Marshal Blücher:—Bulow, with his whole corps, was sent off to defend Laon; the infantry of Winzingerode, under Woronzoff and Stroganoff, were charged with the defence of the plateau of Craonne; while Winzingerode, at the

head of ten thousand horse, and sixty pieces of horse-artillery, followed by Kleist and Langeron, was to pass the Lette, and by cross roads fall on the right wing or rear of the French, while actively engaged on the plateau in front. York was posted on the highway between Soissons and Laon, to afford succour to any point which might require it; and the defence of Soissons was intrusted to Radzewitz, with six thousand men of Langeron's corps.

52. The first attack was made on this important fortress, the loss of which had been the subject of such unbounded mortification to the Emperor. At daylight on the morning of the 5th, the enemy's troops were seen approaching in deep columns, by the road of Chateau-Thierry. Radzewitz immediately made his preparations, and rode round the ranks, reminding his men of what they owed to their sovereign and the honour of the Russian arms. At seven, the enemy commenced the attack on the faubourgs, but they were repulsed with loss. Returning, however, to the charge, they made themselves masters of a considerable part of the houses beyond the walls, and a desperate action, within pistol-shot, ensued in the streets, near to the foot of the ramparts, which was maintained with the greatest resolution on both sides. Transported with ardour, the French, in many places, unroofed the houses of which they had made themselves masters, hoisted up their guns with ropes, on the outside, to the topmost storey, and from thence, as from the moving towers of antiquity, battered the summit of the walls, nearly on an equal footing. But it was all in vain. The Russian grenadiers, with heroic resolution, made good their post against their gallant antagonists, threefold more numerous than themselves; the guns on the bastions maintained their superiority over those of the enemy, somewhat below them in the suburbs; and after the whole day had been consumed, and fifteen hundred men lost to either side in this furious assault, the French marshal drew off, leaving Radzewitz in possession of the bloodstained ramparts.

53. Disappointed in his hopes of turning the allied position by carrying Soissons on its right flank, Napoleon now resolved to hazard a direct attack upon the plateau in its front. Had his army been composed of the soldiers of Arcola or Rivoli, he would have formed his troops into a dense column, and assaulted the Russians on the neck of the narrow tongue of land, as his grenadiers had forced the dykes in the swampy plains of Verona. But, excepting the divisions Friant and Christiani of the Old Guard, with the cuirassiers, they were of a very different description, being in great part conscripts and young troops, almost worn out with the incredible efforts they had already made in the campaign; and who were not always to be relied on except in the presence of the Emperor. In consequence of this, Napoleon felt the necessity of supplying by combination what was wanting in strength; and with this view he made the following dispositions. Ney was charged with the principal attack, which was to be directed against the enemy's left flank, upwards from the slope descending to the valley of the Lette, and he had under his command part of Victor's corps and the dragoons of the Guard; while Nansouty, with the Polish dragoons and Excelmans' division, was to climb the steep on the right of the enemy, from the side of Ouche and the feeders of the Aisne. The main attack along the neck of the plateau, led by Victor, at the head of the infantry of the Guard, was under the direction of Napoleon in person; and by bringing up column after column on that narrow plain, he hoped to force the position, despite its natural advantages, when the heads of his columns showed themselves on either flank. His force actually on the field, and engaged with the enemy, amounted to forty thousand men; the Russians were only twenty-seven thousand, ten thousand under Winzingerode having, as already noticed, been detached to Festieux, to threaten the French rear. But the Russians had the advantage of a very strong position, had not been exhausted by previous com-

bats in the campaign, and were the very flower of the Russian army. By a singular chance, the result of the previous movements which had taken place, both parties had passed each other, and now wheeled about to fight; the Russians with their face to the Rhine, the French with theirs towards Paris.

54. Soon after nine o'clock on the morning of the 7th, two of the enemy's columns appeared on the front of the plateau towards Craone, while a third, without guns, entered the ravine on the left. Blucher at the same time received intelligence that Winzingerode's corps of horse-artillery and cannon, which was destined to turn the French flank, and execute the decisive attack, so far from having yet reached Festieux, its place of destination, was still far in the rear, from having been impeded by the excessive badness of the roads. He instantly ordered Kleist's men to take the start of Winzingerode, and press on direct for that place; while he himself set out in person after Winzingerode, to endeavour to overcome the difficulties which impeded him, leaving Sacken on the neck of land to combat Napoleon. The French forces, preceded by a hundred guns, soon approached in dense masses along the plateau. Shortly the fire of artillery became extremely violent on both sides; for the Russian cannon, consisting of sixty pieces, was admirably posted, and kept up a dreadful discharge, with unerring precision, both in front and flank, on the deep French columns advancing along the neck of the plateau. Napoleon's guns, greatly superior in number, but by no means so advantageously placed, replied with the utmost vigour: their shot, admirably directed, ploughed through the Russian masses, which, drawn up in three lines, almost close together, presented an infallible mark to the gunners. Not a piece was fired without producing a corresponding chasm in the opposite ranks. But nothing could shake the firmness of Woronzoff's troops: whole files were mown down, but the men never wavered, and with the steadiness which discipline superadded to native courage alone can

give, calmly fronted the tempest of death in obedience to their Czar and their oaths. At length the attacking columns recoiled in this fearful strife; and Victor's troops, after sustaining a dreadful loss, withdrew beyond reach of the fire.

55. Meanwhile Ney, on the Russian left, no sooner heard the cannon-shot on the crest of the plateau, than, transported with ardour, he redoubled the vigour of his attack. The hamlet of Ailles was carried after hard fighting; and his tirailleurs, driving the Russian light troops before them, were seen climbing the steep on the left of the plateau. At the same time an attempt was made by Nansouty, with six battalions of infantry, to mount the summit on the right from the side of Ouche. The depth, however, of the ravine on that flank, the badness of the roads, and the well-directed fire of six guns planted on the edge of the plateau, at the top of the declivity, rendered the attack abortive. But no sooner did the Emperor perceive Ney's vanguard appearing on the summit, than he ordered Victor to advance again in a heavy close column along the neck of the position. With such vigour did this column rush forward, supported by Ney's men on their right, in spite of the fire of forty-eight guns on their front and flank, that one of the Russian batteries on the left was carried. It was only a few minutes in the enemy's possession, for the 19th light infantry, and regiment of Shirvan, rushed forward and retook it with the bayonet, hurling the French with loud shouts down the steeps. But the extreme rapidity and violence of the fire now caused, after four hours' fighting, a want of ammunition to be felt in the Russian lines; and Sacken, alarmed by the increasing masses of the French, especially in the valley on his left, and the non-appearance of Blucher or Winzingerode in the rear of the enemy where they had been expected, twice sent orders to Woronzoff to retreat. The brave Russian, however, finding he could still make good his post, and wisely judging that he ran less danger by standing still in

his strong position and continuing the contest, than by retreating in face of such a force as Napoleon commanded, still maintained his ground. But at length Sacken, having received instructions from Blucher to fall back with all his forces to the central position at Laon, gave Woronzoff positive orders to retreat.

56. It was at two o'clock in the afternoon that this hazardous movement commenced. Woronzoff formed his men with admirable steadiness, even under the fire of a hundred French guns, in squares, and ordered the retreat in ordinary time by alternate bodies; the artillery in the openings, and the dismounted guns, two-and-twenty in number, with such of the wounded as could be removed, in front of the retreating column. As soon as Napoleon perceived the retreat commencing, he hurried forward all his guns to his own front, redoubled his fire upon the retiring columns, and ordered up the whole dragoons and cuirassiers to charge along the neck of the plateau. So vehement was their onset, so loud the cries and clatter of the rushing horsemen, that it was at first thought all was lost on the right; but when the smoke cleared away, the steady squares were seen pursuing their march unbroken; and Benken-dorff, with the hussars and Cossacks, bravely charged the French horse, and checked the pursuit. As the retreat continued, and the Russians came past the neck to a wider part of the plateau, the danger became greater, because the more extended surface of the level ground enabled the French cavalry to turn their flanks. At this critical moment, however, Wassilchikoff came up with Lanskoj's hussars and Do-chakoff's dragoons of Sacken's corps. These incomparable troops instantly charged the pursuing horse, and drove them back in their turn. So narrow was the ground in some places, that the horse were obliged to halt and open out, in order to let the infantry and guns through; and instantly closing when they had passed, faced about against the pursuers. Several of the Russian regiments of cavalry charged

in this manner, in less than an hour, eight different times.

57. Meanwhile the Russian troops were approaching the second neck of the plateau, in the rear both of the former and of the wider space between them; and while the cavalry retarded the advance of the enemy, the whole guns of Sacken's and Woronzoff's corps which were not dismounted, sixty-four in number, were placed upon it. The ground was singularly calculated to give efficiency to their fire; for it was at once flanked on either side by perpendicular rocks which could not be scaled, and rose by a steep slope in the narrow isthmus between them, so as to afford the means of placing the cannon in a double row, one behind and the other above, in such a manner that, like the upper and under decks of a ship at sea, they could both discharge at the same time. On this slope the guns were placed; thirty-six in the first line, twenty-eight in the second, opposite to the intervals between the first, and about twenty feet above them. When everything was in readiness, the infantry were marching back slowly, and with perfect regularity, abreast of the first line of guns, when they faced about and dressed in a line with the mouths of the pieces in the lower line, which immediately began to fire with the utmost violence, while the heavy guns in the upper tier thundered over their heads. Before this began, the cavalry, now almost worn out, rapidly withdrew to the right and left, and retired behind the artillery.

58. Great was the astonishment of the French when the screen of horsemen cleared away, and they beheld this close mass of enemies ready to receive them. They were nothing daunted, however, by the sight. Drouot formed the terrible artillery of the Guard in front of this second position, and calmly moved on in the midst of the guns,

* "Not content with thus supporting the movement of General Boyer, Count Drouot, dismounting his horse, proceeded to train his artillery, showing the gunners the mode of charging and pointing, with as much calmness as if he had been in the artillery-ground."—Koch, i. 394.

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on foot, as he was wont, against the double tier of cannon, sometimes aiding in the pointing of a gun, as in the days of his youth at the military college.* Immediately behind him the lofty grenadier caps of the Imperial Guard were seen in dense and formidable array. But all their efforts were in vain. With dauntless intrepidity, indeed, the Old Guard continued to press on along the narrow ridge; but the thicker their columns became the greater was the havoc, until their advance was literally impeded by the heaps of dead and dying. The Russian artillery, worked with extraordinary rapidity, fired, by alternate guns, round-shot and grape from the first line, and round-shot and grenades from the second; and such was the precision of their aim, that the assailants never succeeded, notwithstanding the most heroic efforts, in passing the dreadful strait. This awful cannonade lasted only twenty minutes; when Drouot, finding the position unassailable, drew off his guns, and the fire ceased. Soon after, Woronzoff, having by this stand gained time for his cavalry, wounded, and carriages, to reach the great road from Soissons, himself followed with the rear-guard, and the whole fell back to the environs of Laon.

59. Such was the terrible battle of Craone, the most obstinately contested, if we except Albuera and Culm, of the whole Revolutionary war, and in which it is hard to say to which side of the heroic antagonists the palm of victory is to be awarded. The French were greatly superior in number; for as Sacken's infantry was never engaged, nor even in sight, the whole troops who fought on the Russian side did not exceed twenty-one thousand; while Napoleon had nearly thirty thousand actually under fire.† But this disproportion, great as it was, appears to have been counterbalanced in the result by the incomparable strength of Woronzoff's position, which rendered

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Total.
† Russians under fire,	16,804	4,900	21,704
French ditto,	23,073	6,850	29,923

—Koch, i. 391; and *Die Grosse Chron.* iii. 575, 577.

B

numerical superiority of little avail, and the admirable disposition of his guns, which, both at the commencement and close of the action, gave the Russian artillery, though inferior in number, a decided advantage over that of the French. Trophies of victory there were none to boast of by either party. The French won the field of battle, but it was covered only with the dead or the dying: no prisoners were made, or cannon or standards taken, on either side; and the field itself was yielded, not to the attacks, impetuous as they were, of Napoleon's grenadiers, but to the general policy of the campaign, which, after Winzingerode's circular march against the French rear had failed, induced the Prussian field-marshal to direct a general concentration of his forces in the noble position of Laon. The loss on both sides was enormous; and, save at Albuera, unprecedented in proportion to the number of troops engaged in the whole war. The Russians were weakened by five thousand killed and wounded; but on the side of the French no less than eight thousand brave men, being more than a fourth of the troops engaged, had fallen. Woronzoff deservedly had the order of St George, of the second class, immediately conferred upon him by a grateful sovereign: wounds and death were the only returns which now remained for French deeds of heroism. Victor was severely lacerated by a cannon-ball in the thigh; Grouchy, Nansouty, Boyer, and two other generals, more slightly.

60. Had Winzingerode's attack, supported by Kleist, in the rear, not been prevented from taking place by the extraordinary difficulties which impeded his march, Napoleon's career would, in all probability, have been terminated at Craone, as it afterwards was at Waterloo. His last reserves had been engaged on the plateau; he had no troops in hand to oppose to any fresh attack; and the apparition in his rear of ten thousand horse, followed by Kleist and Langeron's corps, would have proved fatal. It cannot be denied that Blucher erred egregiously in dispersing his army so much before

the battle; and that, considering that his forces, upon the whole, were double those of his antagonist, it afforded the most decisive proof of his having been out-generaled, or singularly ill-used by fortune, that, at the decisive point, the French so far outnumbered his troops engaged. Proportionally greater was the credit due to the heroism of Woronzoff and his unconquerable soldiers, who overcame all these obstacles, and contended on equal terms, during the whole day, against Napoleon, at the head of such superior forces, including his redoubtable Guards and cuirassiers. Innumerable were the deeds of heroism performed by officers and men on both sides. Ney, Mortier, and Victor combated on foot at the head of their troops, and were always to be seen in the thickest of the fire, animating the troops by their voice and example. Woronzoff repeatedly, during the retreat, threw himself into the squares, and in person gave the word of command to fire, when the French had come within fifty paces: Major-general Poncet, severely wounded, stood before his brigade on crutches, and positively refused to retire till the line was directed to fall back: the regiment of Shirvan, having exhausted their cartridges, and being surrounded by the French cavalry, thrice forced their way through with fixed bayonets, bringing with them their dead colonel, and all the officers who had been either killed or wounded: Dochakoff, on being mortally wounded, exclaimed to his regiment, "Halt, Courlanders!" and breathed his last.

61. The French army, after this terrible battle, separated into two columns, and moved towards Laon. While the cavalry were on the road to Laon, Napoleon traversed in the gloom of the evening the blood-stained summit of the plateau, and then descended into the valley of the Aisne, to seek a hamlet wherein to pass the night, and found it in the village of Bray. His spirits were unusually depressed, as well by the bloody and unsatisfactory issue of the action, as by the intelligence which he received the same evening

from Châtillon, announcing the firm determination of the Allies to break up the conference, unless the fundamental principle of reducing France to its ancient limits was agreed to. The Emperor was not prepared for such unanimity on the part of the allied plenipotentiaries; he still clung to the hope that Austria would break off. He refused, however, to yield to those terms, and a messenger was despatched with instructions to Caulaincourt to present a counter-project, and strive to gain time. "I see clearly," said he, "that this war is an abyss, but I will be the last to bury myself in it. If we must wear the fetters, it is not I who will stretch out my hands to receive them." He was deeply depressed, however, by the issue of the action, and wrote that night to Joseph at Paris—"The Old Guard alone stood firm; the rest melted like snow." Such was his irritation from the desperate state of his affairs, that he gave orders, in one of his fits of fury, to shoot some Russian prisoners, probably in retaliation for some peasants slain; and the command, before he relented, was unhappily carried into execution at the village of Vaurains.

62. On the following day, Blücher collected all his six corps round the splendid position of Laon. So exhausted were the French by their efforts during the battle, that they did not move from their ground till ten next day; and as the Russians marched the whole night, they got the start of the enemy, and reached the neighbourhood of that town in safety. Napoleon also on his side collected his whole forces, which now amounted to about forty-eight thousand men. Marmont, who was ordered up from Soissons, crossed the Aisne at Bery-au-Bac, and, after sleeping at Corbeny, approached Laon by the road of Rheims; while the bulk of the army, consisting of the corps of Ney and Mortier, with the cuirassiers and reserve cavalry, after having joined the great road from Soissons to Laon at Chavignon and Vaurains, approached on the chaussée from Paris. Notwithstanding all his losses, Blücher had still nearly

ninety thousand men grouped around the hill of Laon; and the approach to the position was by a defile two miles in length, where the road crosses a marsh that runs up to the foot of the hill. Chernicheff was posted at Etouville, which lay at the entrance of this defile, with four regiments of infantry and twenty-four guns; and he defended himself so vigorously against the impetuous attacks of Marshal Ney, who commanded the French advanced guard, that at nightfall he was still unable to make any impression. After it was dark, however, the peasants conducted the Old Guard through by-paths across the marshes; so that, at daybreak on the 9th, Chernicheff found his post at the entrance of the defile no longer tenable, and withdrew with all his forces to the position of Laon. There, soon after, Radzewitz arrived with the garrison of Soissons, having by forced marches and extraordinary vigilance eluded all the efforts of the enemy to intercept him. The accession of these forces, and the general concentration of his troops, raised Blücher's army to one hundred and four thousand men, including twenty-four thousand horse, and two hundred and sixty guns, all concentrated and supporting each other: while Napoleon, including Marmont, had only fifty-two thousand, of whom not more than fourteen thousand were cavalry.

63. LAON is a town of great antiquity, containing seven thousand souls, and well known to travellers in that part of France. Like that of Cassel on the borders of Flanders, it stands upon the flat summit of a conical hill about three-quarters of a mile in breadth, and elevated nearly two hundred and fifty feet above the adjacent plain. It is surrounded by irregular ancient walls and towers, standing on the edge of the lofty plateau as it sinks into the declivity, and following its varied sinuosities. Gardens, orchards, and grass fields lie on the slopes of this huge truncated cone; the roads leading to the town ascend by a gentle slope up the long acclivity. The houses at the foot, fronting the highways and vil-

lages adjacent, were all loopholed, and filled with musketeers; a hundred pieces of cannon crowded the ramparts on the summit, while numerous other batteries crowned every commanding eminence in the adjoining slopes. On these slopes, and in the neighbouring villages, lay the immense host of the allied army, having the town for a vast redoubt in its centre, and extending with its wings far into the plain on either side. On the right lay Winzingerode's men, drawn up in two lines near Aven; in the centre, Bulow's corps occupied the hill of Laon, the villages of Semilly and Ardon, with the abbey of St Vincent at its foot, and manned the numerous batteries disposed around its slopes. On the left, those of Kleist and York extended from Laon to Chambry, opposite to Athies, and stretched far into the plain on the road leading to Rheims. Sacken's and Langeron's troops, which had suffered so severely in the preceding combats, were in reserve behind Laon. The positions of the French, they being fewer in number, were much more concentrated. Marmont was expected on the right, being ordered to come up by the road from Rheims to a spot assigned between Chambry and Athies in the level plain: Mortier, with the Guards, and the whole reserve cavalry under Grouchy and Nansouty, was in the centre; opposite Laon, in front of them, half way to Semilly and Ardon, was Ney with his indefatigable corps, yet reeking with the blood of Craone.

64. It was a sublime and animating sight, when, on the evening of the 8th March, the allied army withdrew on all sides into the vicinity of this ancient and celebrated town. To the anxious and trembling crowds of citizens, and peasants driven in from the adjacent country which had been the theatre of hostilities, the horizon to the south and west appeared covered by innumerable fires; loud discharges of cannon rolled on all sides, and sensibly approached the town; long lines of light, proceeding from the fire of the infantry of the Allies as they retired, or of the French as they advanced, were distinctly seen as the

shades of evening set in. When night approached, and darkness overspread the plain, a still more extraordinary spectacle presented itself. The continued discharges in the midst of the thickets and woods, with which the country abounded, produced a strange optical illusion, which converted the trees into so many electrical tubes, from the summits of which sparks and dazzling light, as from so many fire-works, appeared to rush upwards into the heavens. In the midst of this lurid illumination, long lines of infantry, dark masses of cavalry, and endless files of artillery, were seen covering the plain in all directions, till they were lost in the obscurity of distance.

65. The succeeding day, being the 9th, was passed without any serious action on either side. Approached to the villages of Clacy, Semilly, and Ardon, at the foot of the hill of Laon, the centre and left, composed of the troops under Napoleon in person, were perfectly prepared for an attack. But he was justly unwilling to hazard a general engagement until his right wing, under Marmont, came up to its ground from the side of Rheims; and repeatedly in the course of the day he despatched messengers in that direction, to learn where the marshal was, and how soon he might be expected in the field. Meanwhile, in order to feel the strength of the enemy's position, Ney was ordered to advance right against Laon, by the great road from Soissons. Favoured by a thick fog, which entirely enveloped the hill of Laon, and concealed his advance from the enemy, he succeeded, by a sudden attack, in making himself master of the villages of Semilly and Ardon at the foot of the hill, and was only prevented from pushing up its slopes by the concentric fire of the batteries, which commanded every approach to the town. At eleven the mist cleared away, and the whole field of battle became visible from the ramparts. Blucher, perceiving how inconsiderable were the forces opposed to him in the centre, resolved to resume the offensive, and drive the enemy from the villages he had won at

the foot of the hill. With this view, while Woronzoff's infantry were ordered to attack Semilly in front, and Bulow's at Ardon, a division of infantry, supported by all Winzingerode's cavalry, was directed to make a sweep in the plain, and turn their left. This double attack entirely succeeded; and Ney's corps were driven back across the chaussée and marshes towards Etouville, in such disorder, that it was only by charging with the Imperial Guard and reserve cavalry, that that marshal and Belliard succeeded in arresting the pursuit of the Allies, and driving them back to the bottom of the hill. At four in the afternoon, Napoleon having learned that Marmont had come up to his ground on the right, towards Athies on the road to Rheims, brought forward his Guards and cuirassiers, by a vigorous advance again expelled the Allies from Ardon, and carried, after a bloody struggle, the village of Clacy and the abbey of St Vincent from the Russians on their right.

66. Neither party, however, were intent on these attacks; both fought only to gain time. Napoleon was counting the minutes, till the announcement of the approach of Marmont warned him that he might with safety commence a real attack upon the enemy at once in front and flank; while Blucher, having received intelligence of the French marshal being expected on the road to Rheims from Laon, was taking measures to fall upon and crush him when he was totally unsupported by the remainder of the army. Meanwhile Marmont, who had begun his march early in the morning from Bery-au-Bac, issued at one in the afternoon from the defile of Festieux, and, driving the Prussian videttes before him, commenced an attack at four o'clock on a division of York's infantry, which was stationed at Athies, and after a fierce combat the Prussians were driven out of the village, which became a prey to the flames. Blucher now clearly perceived, from the vivacity of this assault, that the principal effort of the enemy was to be made in that direction. He saw that Napoleon's design was to amuse him by false attacks in

front on the Soissons road, and meanwhile turn his flank, cut him off from all communication with the Grand Army, and throw him back on a separate field of operations on the side of Flanders. He immediately took measures to defeat this project, and convert it into the means of the enemy's ruin; and for this object his central position at Laon, midway as it were between the two wings of the French army, presented extraordinary advantages. Langeron and Sacken were moved up behind Laon to the left, so as to be in a condition to support York; Kleist was ordered up to the front, close in his rear: the horse-artillery of the army of Silesia was moved to the extreme left, so as to be ready to commence the attack: the infantry were all arranged in close columns, the cavalry in dense array of squadrons; and the whole received orders to advance, as soon as it was dark, in double-quick time, and without firing a shot or uttering a word, against the enemy.

67. Meanwhile Marmont's troops, worn out with fatigue, and wholly unconscious of their danger, had sunk to sleep in their frigid bivouacs. At nightfall, when the French were lighting their watchfires, the Prussians in deep array and perfect silence advanced to the attack: Prince William of Prussia led the infantry, which were headed by the brigades of Horn and Klux, and moved by the high-road right on Athies. The fields on either side were filled with the remainder of Kleist's corps, all in close column, so as to occupy very little room; while Ziethen's turned the right flank of the enemy, and drove them back on the infantry. Both attacks proved entirely successful. So complete was the surprise, so universal the consternation, that the French merely fired one round of grape on the approach of Prince William, and then dispersed, every one flying in the profound darkness whither chance or his fears directed. Ziethen's horse at the same instant falling on the right, increased the confusion: the fugitives from these two attacks, flying at right angles to each other, soon got intermingled, and poured headlong out in

frightful disorder on the road to Bery-au-Bac ; while the Prussian infantry, pressing on through the throng with loud shouts, soon arrived at the grand park and reserve caissons, all of which, with the exception of a few pieces, were taken.* The Prussian hussars, highly elated with their success, continued the pursuit without intermission, and the darkness of the night alone prevented the whole corps being made prisoners. In wild confusion, horse, foot, and the few cannon which had escaped hurried through the defile of Festieux, six miles off, at the entrance of which Colonel Fabvier contrived to rally a few hundred men, who, from the smallness of their number not being perceived in the darkness of the night, contrived to stop the pursuit. As it was, however, Marmont lost forty pieces of cannon, a hundred and thirty-one caissons, and two thousand five hundred prisoners. The number of killed and wounded, from the rapidity of the flight, was not considerable ; but his corps was totally dispersed, and disabled from taking any part, till reorganised, in any military operation. The whole loss of the Allies was not three hundred men.

68. Napoleon, anticipating a general battle, was drawing on his boots at four o'clock in the morning of the 10th, with his horse already at the door, when two dragoons, who had just arrived on foot in great consternation, were brought to him. They stated that they had escaped by a miracle from a nocturnal hurrah which the enemy had made on the bivouacs of Marmont ; that the marshal himself was killed or taken, and that all was lost on that side. He immediately gave orders to suspend the preparations for a general attack, which were already commencing ; and soon after, more authentic intelligence of the disaster arrived, to the effect that the mar-

shal was neither killed nor taken, but that his corps was entirely dispersed, its artillery lost, and the fugitives, in disorder, were only beginning to rally in the neighbourhood of Fismes. The Emperor at once saw, that to persist in his attack on Laon, defended by an enemy in a very strong position, double in amount to his own force, and with his right wing, for the time at least, *hors de combat*, was a vain attempt. But how to retreat in the face of a victorious enemy was the question ; for already Blücher, elated by his success, had given orders to Langeron, Sacken, York, and Kleist, to pursue Marmont with the utmost vigour ; and he himself was only waiting on the ramparts of Laon, from whence he saw every movement in the French army, for the commencement of the retreat of the main body, to pursue on the road to Soissons.

69. In this dilemma Napoleon adopted the wisest course he could have pursued, which was, to remain where he was, and impose upon the Prussian general by the display of a formidable force in front ; so as at once to prevent pursuit of his own corps, and relieve the pressure on that of Marmont. So completely did this plan succeed, that Blücher, who in the first instance had given orders to Bülow and Winzingerode to issue forth from Laon in pursuit of the French main body, not only countermanded the directions upon seeing that they stood firm, and seemed rather preparing for an attack, but despatched orders to the generals in pursuit of Marmont to return with their infantry, and follow him up only with their cavalry. Chernicheff in consequence, who at daybreak had made a successful attack with Winzingerode's advanced guard on the French division at Clacy, on the allied right, finding himself unsupported, was obliged to return in haste to the foot of the hill of Laon ; and shortly after nine o'clock Napoleon ordered a general advance against that formidable position. The action soon became extremely warm, and when the French approached the hill, they were received by such tremendous discharges of artillery from

* "Some fled away because his strength they feared,
Some bolder 'gainst him bent their weapons keen ;
And froward night, in ills and mischiefs pleased,
Their dangers hid, and dangers still increased."—Tasso, *Ger. Lib.*, ix. 26.

the heights around its foot, as well as of musketry from the loopholed villages, that after sustaining a severe loss they were obliged to retire. At four o'clock the grand park and equipages began to defile on the road to Soissons, and the French troops withdrew at all points; but the cannonade continued till nightfall, and from the summit of the ramparts of Laon, the march of the retiring columns could be traced by the sight of villages in flames, and the awful spectacle of granaries, farmyards, and churches consuming under the reckless fury of the devastating bands, which, like a stream of lava, overspread even their own territory with conflagration and ruin.

70. Thus terminated the combats around Laon, which, though scarcely worthy of being dignified by the name of a battle, from the desultory manner in which they were conducted, and the great space over which they extended, were hardly inferior to any pitched engagement fought during the whole war in interest and importance. The whole disposable forces of the Emperor Napoleon, under his own immediate orders, had been brought to a stand; their assault upon a strong position had been defeated; the object of the expedition beyond the Marne had been frustrated, and the Grand Army left at liberty to pursue, during ten days, active operations on the side of Troyes and Fontainebleau, which, if vigorously followed up, might during the absence of the Emperor have led to the capture of Paris. The combats around Laon, including the losses sustained by Marmont, had cost the French Emperor six thousand men

* Viz.—At Craone, . . .	8,000
Assault of Soissons, . . .	1,500
Around Laon, . . .	6,000
Lesser affairs, . . .	500
	<hr/>
	16,000

Such were the chasms made in the ranks during these sanguinary struggles, that an entire reorganisation of great part of the army took place at Soissons, by the amalgamation of the divisions which had principally suffered; and the divisions of the Young Guard of Ney and Victor, as well as the division of infantry of General Porot de Morveau, entirely disappeared.—Koch, i. 429; PLOTHO, iii. 301; and *Die Grosse Chronik*, iii. 613.

and forty-six pieces of cannon, while the Allies were not weakened by more than four thousand: his total loss since he left Troyes, on the 1st March, amounted to sixteen thousand men.* His situation now appeared altogether desperate:—obliged to retire towards his capital, followed by a victorious army double his own strength, only to fall there into the jaws of a still larger army, driving before it two beaten corps not mustering between them twenty-five thousand sabres and bayonets. In this expedition against Blücher, the Emperor was far from having shown his wonted skill. His bloody attack on the plateau of Craone had savoured rather of the obstinacy of a victorious, than the caution of a defensive commander; and his plan of attack at Laon, operating by his two wings, separated six miles from each other, and incapable of mutual support, upon an enemy twice his strength, and occupying a central position of uncommon strength between them, was precisely such an error as he had turned to such admirable account, when committed by his adversaries at Castiglione in 1796, and at Dresden in 1813 [*ante*, Ch. xx. § 105; and Ch. LXXX. § 24].†

71. But it soon appeared that the genius of Napoleon had been obscured for a moment, though it was not extinguished; and when all thought his fortunes desperate, he struck such a blow, in a quarter where it was least expected, as had well-nigh re-established his affairs, by the renewed timidity which it infused into the Austrian councils. On the night of the 10th the Emperor slept at Chavignon, on the road to Soissons; and on the 11th,

† This is accordingly admitted by the ablest of the French military historians, and the most zealous partisans of Napoleon. "It does not appear that the Emperor acted according to the rules of art, or the prudence which the disproportion of his means required, in engaging the Duke of Ragusa (Marmont), at the same time that he attacked himself. He was as yet uncertain of the line of the enemy's operations, and his army was not a quarter of theirs in number. That quarter might have conquered if they had been mustered together; but it was impossible to separate one corps without exposing it to destruction from a force tenfold its own."—VAUDONCOURT, ii. 63.

the army continued its retreat to the defiles in front of that town. This fortress, which had again fallen into the hands of the French after Radzewitz's retreat to Laon, ever of primary importance during the campaign in this quarter, now offered the same secure passage across the Aisne to the retreating French, which it formerly had done to the allied army. The whole of the 12th was spent there also: the Emperor being busied with Mortier and the officers of engineers in providing for the defence of the place; and while giving a brief repose to the wearied soldiers of his army, he himself rode out on horseback to survey the environs, and choose the positions which might appear most defensible. During all this time, and, in fact, for nine days after the battle of Laon, Blücher remained in a state of complete inactivity with his vast army in that impregnable position — a delay, after such an advantage as he had recently gained, which would appear altogether inexplicable, if we did not know that, at this period, the allied army was almost starving from the total exhaustion of the country in which it had so long carried on the war; that the troops, worn out with six weeks' incessant marching and fighting in the most inclement weather, stood urgently in need of repose; that the veteran field-marshal was so ill, from ague and inflammation in the eyes, as to be unable to sit on horseback during the remainder of the campaign; and that Gneisenau and the officers of his staff felt that, having almost performed the part allotted to them in it, the time had arrived when it behoved the Grand Army to do something worthy of its gigantic strength, and such as might be expected after its long-continued inaction.*

72. On the night of the 12th, however, Napoleon received information which induced him to alter the line of his operations, by presenting him with

* "The true object of our stay here is not a military one. The only design I have in view is to give repose to a harassed army, and, as far as possible, to provide it with bread."—BLÜCHER to WINZINGBRODE, 14th March 1814; DANILEFSKY, 244, 245.

a new enemy accessible to his strokes, and capable of being destroyed. General St Priest, with his corps of Russians, forming part of the reserves of the army of Silesia, had been left at Chalons, in order to keep up the communication between Blücher and Schwartzemberg; and having learned, during the concentration of all the French troops around Laon, that the garrison left by them in Rheims was very weak, particularly in cavalry, he resolved to attempt to carry the place. Like all the towns in that quarter, it was fortified, though not strongly, and the walls were in disrepair in several places, and but imperfectly armed; and St Priest, having been reinforced by the Prussian brigade of General Jagon, who had marched on after the surrender of Erfurth, determined to hazard an attack. The garrison, about two thousand strong, with only twelve pieces of cannon, were little in a condition to defend a town containing thirty thousand inhabitants against a corps of fifteen thousand men. He met, accordingly, with very little resistance: the garrison, after discharging a few rounds, endeavoured to escape out of the place by a gate which had not been blockaded, and six hundred of them, with ten guns, were made prisoners in the attempt. The town itself was taken, with hardly any of the outrages or disorders consequent on a place carried by assault; some property which had been plundered was immediately restored, and the marauders punished; St Priest himself went to the cathedral to return thanks for his victory; and the troops, for the sake of recreation, were in great part allowed to amuse themselves in the surrounding hamlets.

73. The capture of this import town at once re-established the communications of Blücher with the Grand Army, and threatened Napoleon's right flank. He no sooner heard of it, accordingly, than he gave orders for the whole army, with the exception of Mortier's corps, which was left for the defence of Soissons, to defile to the right on the road for Rheims. With such expedition did they march, that on the evening of the

samedayonwhichtheysetoutfromSoissons, the advanced guards appeared before the walls of Rheims. The Prussian videttes could hardly believe their own eyes, when the increasing numbers of the enemy showed that a serious attack was intended. But notwithstanding repeated warnings sent to St Priest, he persisted in declaring it was only a few light troops that were appearing, and could not be brought to believe that the army so recently defeated at Laon was already in a condition to resume offensive operations. At length, at four o'clock, the cries of the troops, and well-known grenadier caps of the Old Guard, announced that the Emperor himself was on the field; and then, as well he might, the Russian general hastily began to take measures for his defence. The nearest regiments, without order, or any regular array, hurried off to the threatened point; the French, skilfully feigning to be outnumbered, ceased firing and fell back, and for a short time all was quiet. St Priest was confirmed by this circumstance in the belief that it was only a partisan division which was before him, or, at most, the beaten corps of Marmont, for which he conceived himself fully a match; and even on being assured by a prisoner that Napoleon was with the troops, he said, "He will not step over fourteen thousand men. You need not ask which way to retire—there will be no retreat."

74. Shortly afterwards Napoleon arrived, and, after looking on the town for a short time, dryly observed, "The ladies of Rheims will soon have a bad quarter of an hour," and gave orders for an immediate attack. The Allies by this time had almost entirely assembled in front of the town, and occupied a position in two lines, guarding the approaches to it; the right resting on the river Vesle, the left extending to the Basse-Muire; the reserves on the plateau of St Genevieve in the suburbs, where twenty-four pieces of cannon were planted. These preparations seemed to prognosticate a vigorous defence; but the promptitude and force of Napoleon's attack rendered them of very little avail.

Eight thousand horse, supported by thirty pieces of horse-artillery, were directed at once against the Russian left, to which St Priest had hardly any cavalry to oppose; in a few minutes three Prussian battalions were surrounded and made prisoners. At the same time Marmont, supported by the Guards of Honour and cavalry of the Guard, advanced by the high-road direct upon the enemy's centre. The Russian general upon this, perceiving that he was immensely overmatched, gave orders for the first line to fall back on the second; and, at the same time, the battery of twenty-four guns withdrew towards the rear. Hardly were these movements commenced, when he himself was wounded in the shoulder by a ball. This event discouraged the troops; and the retiring columns, aware of their danger from the great masses which were everywhere pressing after them, fell into disorder, and hastened, with more speed than was consistent with discipline, into the town. Owing to the narrowness of the bridge and streets, the men got entangled at every step, and in less than a quarter of an hour became a mere mob; while the French infantry and cavalry, with loud shouts, were pressing on their rear. Such was the scene of horror and confusion which soon ensued, that it appeared impossible for any part of the corps to escape; and none in all probability would have done so, but for the steadiness of the regiment of Riazan, which, under its heroic colonel, Count Scobelof, formed square on the field of battle, and not only repulsed the repeated attacks of an enormous mass of cavalry at the entrance of the town, and gave time for a large part of the corps to defile in the rear, but itself pierced through the forest of sabres with the bayonet, bearing their bleeding and dying general in their arms.

75. General Emmanuel now took the command; and the most vigorous efforts were made at the entrance of the town, by disposing the troops in the houses which adjoined it; and so obstinate was the resistance which they presented, that for above three

hours the French were kept at bay. Towards midnight, however, it was discovered that the enemy, by fording the Vesle, had got round the town, and therefore the whole troops in it were withdrawn, some on the road to Chalons, others on that to Laon, while the defence of the gate was intrusted to a non-commissioned officer of the 33d light infantry, with two hundred men. This little band of heroes kept their ground to the last, and were found by the officer sent to withdraw them dividing their few remaining cartridges, and encouraging each other to hold out even till death. When they received orders to retire, they did so in perfect order, as the evacuation was completed; and they fortunately succeeded in effecting their retreat in the darkness. Napoleon then made his entry into the town at one o'clock in the morning, by torch-light, amidst the acclamations of his troops, and the enthusiastic cheers of the inhabitants, who gave vent to the general transport in a spontaneous illumination. In this brilliant affair the French took two thousand five hundred prisoners, eleven guns, and a hundred caissons, and the total loss of the Allies was three thousand five hundred. On the other hand the Emperor Napoleon was only weakened by eight hundred men: a wonderful achievement to have been effected by a worn-out army, after nearly two months' incessant marching and fighting, and two days after a disastrous defeat; but more memorable still, by one circumstance which gives it a peculiar interest—it was the LAST TOWN NAPOLEON EVER TOOK.

76. On the same day General Jansen arrived at the French headquarters, from Flanders, bringing with him a reinforcement of six thousand men, which he had collected from the garrisons in the neighbourhood of the Ardennes forest, in obedience to the orders despatched from Fismes twelve days before. This reinforcement was of vast importance at that period, when the Emperor was so severely weakened by the losses of the dreadful campaign in which he had been engaged; and it

illustrates the extreme imprudence, of which he had now himself become sensible, of that obstinate tenacity of disposition, which had prompted him so long to retain fifty thousand veterans in useless inactivity in the German fortresses, and as many more in the places on the Rhine, while he himself, with no greater force than either taken separately, was reduced to his last resources on the plains of Champagne. To repair if possible the error he had committed, he despatched Ney to Chalons, and General Vincent to Epernay, who expelled the enemy from these towns; while the great body of the French forces were cantoned in Rheims and the villages in its vicinity. From Chalons, Ney despatched, in profusion, officers and secret emissaries, with instructions to all the garrisons on the Rhine, and between that and the theatre of war, to hold themselves in readiness to break through the blockading forces with which they were environed, and join the Emperor as soon as they should receive intimation that the proper moment was arrived. At the same time directions were given to the peasantry in all the rural districts, the moment the Allies began to retreat, to fall on their flanks and lines of communication, and do them all the mischief in their power. During all this time Blücher remained inactive at Laon; and on the 17th a grand review of all his forces took place, when it was ascertained, that with the additions received since the battle there, from St Priest's corps and other sources, they now numbered a hundred and ninety thousand combatants, of whom twenty-nine thousand were horse, with two hundred and sixty-five guns.

77. Meanwhile a review took place at Rheims of all the troops under the immediate command of the Emperor; but how different from the splendid military spectacles of the Tuileries or Chammartin, which had so often dazzled his sight with the pomp of apparently irresistible power! Wasted away to half the numbers which they possessed when they crossed the Marne a fortnight before, the greater part of the regiments exhibited only the skeletons

tons of military array. In some, more officers than privates were to be seen in the ranks; in all, the appearance of the troops, the haggard air of the men, their worn-out dresses, and the strange motley of which these were composed, bespoke the total exhaustion of the empire. It was evident to all that Napoleon was expending his last resources. Beside the veterans of the Guard—the iron men whom nothing could daunt, but whose tattered garments and soiled accoutrements bespoke the dreadful fatigues to which they had been subjected—were to be seen young conscripts, but recently torn from the embraces of maternal love, and whose wan visages and faltering steps told but too clearly that they were unequal to the weight of the

arms which they bore. The gaunt figures and woeful aspect of the horses, the broken carriages and blackened mouths of the guns, the crazy and fractured artillery waggons which defiled past, the general confusion of arms, battalions, and uniforms, even in the best-appointed corps, spoke of the mere remains of the vast military array which had so long stood triumphant against the world in arms. The soldiers exhibited none of their ancient enthusiasm as they defiled past the Emperor; silent and sad they took their way before him: the stern realities of war had chased away its enthusiastic ardour. All felt that in this dreadful contest they themselves would perish, happy if they had not previously witnessed the degradation of France.

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

CAMPAIGN IN HOLLAND, ITALY, AND THE SOUTH OF FRANCE.

JANUARY—APRIL, 1814.

1. ALTHOUGH Napoleon allowed a few days' repose to his wearied troops, he gave none to his own indefatigable mind. Though he witnessed around him the wreck of a world, he stood undaunted amidst its ruins, realising thus the well-known lines of the Roman poet—

*"Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum serient ruinae."* *

During these days of physical repose, he was indefatigable in the cabinet. The varied concerns of his still vast empire passed before his view; despatches from all quarters were received; and his final resolution to reject the terms offered by the Allies at Châtillon was taken. This brief intermission in military operations, both

at the headquarters of the Emperor Napoleon, of Marshal Blücher, and of the Grand Army, affords a favourable opportunity for reviewing, with the now straitened conqueror, the varied condition of the remoter parts of his empire, preparatory to detailing the grand catastrophe of his fall.

2. From Antwerp and Flanders the accounts were on the whole satisfactory. After the expulsion of the French from Holland, in the middle of the preceding December, the tri-color flag waved only on Bergen-op-Zoom, Bois-le-Duc, Gorcum, and one or two lesser forts, the main strength of the French forces in that quarter being concentrated in Antwerp, which Napoleon justly classed with Mayence on the Rhine, and Alessandria in Piedmont, as the principal bulwarks of his empire. To impose upon the Allies,

* "Should the world itself break in pieces,
Fearless will the ruins strike him."

HORACE.

by the sound at least of military preparations, the Emperor, by a decree in the end of December, had ordered the formation of an army of fifty-five battalions, the command of which was bestowed on Count Maison. This respectable force, however, like most of the others of which Napoleon had the direction at this period, existed in great part only on paper; and when that general arrived at Antwerp in the end of December, he found that he could not reckon on twenty thousand men for the defence of the whole Low Countries. In fact, it was apparent that, so far from thinking of the reconquest of Holland, it would be all he could do to provide for the defence of Flanders, now threatened on its maritime quarter by the English, and on the side of the Meuse by the Russians and Prussians. He therefore strengthened the garrisons of Antwerp and Bergen-op-Zoom, and made every possible provision for the victualling, arming, and providing of these fortresses.

8. Meanwhile, an English division, six thousand strong, under the orders of Sir Thomas Graham, who had resigned his command in Spain the day after the victorious passage of the Bidassoa, on the 7th October preceding [*ante*, Chap. LXXXIII. § 18], landed in South Beveland, and concerted measures with Bulow, who had crossed the canal and advanced towards Antwerp. A general forward movement in consequence commenced on the 10th January, which, after a variety of minor actions, brought on a warm contest on the 13th, when a combined attack was made on the village of Merxem, near Antwerp, by the British under General Mackenzie in front, and the Prussians under Thumen in flank. The 78th Highlanders headed the assault, led by their brave colonel, M'Leod, and the French were driven out of the village and back into Antwerp in the most gallant style, with the loss of a thousand men killed and wounded. The Allies, however, suffered nearly as much from the heavy fire which the enemy kept up at the entrance of the village; and as they

were ignorant of the strength of the garrison of Antwerp, and not prepared at that period to commence the investment of the place, they withdrew at night to their former positions, although they had approached so near to it that their bombs already fell in the suburbs and docks of the fortress.

4. On the night of the 25th, aided by the inhabitants, Bulow made a successful attack on Bois-le-Duc, which was taken by escalade, with its garrison of six hundred men. This enabled the Prussian general to turn his whole forces against Maison; and the latter not feeling himself in sufficient strength to keep the field against the superior forces of the Allies, left Antwerp to its own resources, threw a garrison of a thousand men into Malines, and took post at Louvain, as a central point from which he might be able to observe the numerous enemies who now inundated the Low Countries. They were very formidable; for, in addition to Bulow and Graham on the side of Antwerp, Winzingerode, with his numerous corps of Russians, was exciting the utmost alarm, as already mentioned, by his unresisted march from the Rhine, by Liege, towards the old French frontier. No sooner was Antwerp left to its own resources than Bulow approached its walls, and completed the investment; and three thousand additional troops having arrived from England, and a small battering train been obtained from Holland, operations of a vigorous character were commenced against the place. The great object was not to breach and carry its ramparts, for which the battering train as yet at the disposal of the Allies was wholly inadequate, but to bombard the town, and burn the great fleet constructed there by Napoleon, by means of which he had so long flattered himself he would effect the subjugation of Great Britain. Extraordinary precautions had, however, been taken by Admiral Missiessy, who commanded the squadrons, to render nugatory the effects of a bombardment, by blinding the ships in the docks with turf, wet blankets,

and a variety of other articles, which rendered them impervious to the heaviest shells, as had been done at Malta in the year 1799. On the first of February, a general attack was made on the French advanced posts beyond the works, by the combined Prussian and British forces; and although the former experienced a bloody repulse near the village of Duerne, the British pushed back the enemy from Braeschaet to Merxem, and next day carried the latter village by assault, driving the French, with severe loss, entirely into the works of the place on that side. They immediately commenced the construction of mortar batteries behind the dikes of St Ferdinand; and with such vigour were the approaches advanced during the night, that next morning a heavy fire was commenced upon the shipping.

5. It was at this moment that Carnot took the command at Antwerp. This stern republican—who had lived in retirement since the fall of Robespierre, resisted all the offers of Napoleon during the zenith of his power to lure him from his retreat, and almost singly voted against his being made Emperor [*ante*, Chap. xxxviii. § 45]—now came forward, with true patriotic devotion, to offer him, in his adversity, what remained of strength at sixty-four years of age, for the defence of the country.* Napoleon knew how to appreciate grandeur of character, even in the most decided political opponent. He immediately said, upon receiving the letter, "Since Carnot offers me his services, I know he will be faithful to the post which I assign to him: I appoint him governor of Antwerp." The sturdy veteran arrived at the fortress, and entered by one of the southern gates the very day the bombardment commenced. He found the garrison fifteen thousand

strong; but nevertheless, anticipating a long siege, and deeming it necessary to husband his resources, he immediately withdrew all his outposts within the outworks, so that the Prussians approached without resistance so near the place as to be able to take a part in the bombardment. It produced, however, very little effect. By the admirable precautions of Carnot and Missiessy, the fire, which was repeatedly raised in different quarters of the city and harbour, was immediately extinguished; the vessels of war in the docks were so protected as to be almost impervious to shells; the mortars which the English made use of, brought from Holland, though well served, soon became for the most part unserviceable, from too frequent discharges; and after the bombardment had been kept up for three days it was discontinued, from failure of ammunition. At the same time, Bulow received orders to raise the siege of the place, and advance with his corps into France, to take part in the great operations in contemplation against Napoleon, in which, as already mentioned, he rendered the most essential service. The British, not half the strength of the garrison of the place, were in no condition to maintain their ground before it; and accordingly Sir Thomas Graham retired to his former cantonments, between Antwerp and Bergen-op-Zoom; and Carnot, in conformity with his principle of reserving the strength of the garrison for ulterior operations, made no attempt to disquiet them in their retreat.

6. Though Bulow, however, had passed on into France, and the English had retired to the frontiers of Holland, yet there was no intermission in the deluge of allied troops which rolled over Flanders. Wave after wave succeeded, as in those days when the long-restrained might of the northern nations found vent in the decaying provinces of the Roman empire. The Prince of Saxe-Weimar, reinforced by Borstell's brigade of Prussians, kept the field at the head of fifteen thousand foot and two thousand horse; Brussels was soon evacu-

* "The offer is little, without doubt, of an arm sixty years old; but I thought that the example of a soldier, whose patriotic sentiments are known, might have the effect of rallying to your eagles a number of persons hesitating as to the part which they should take, and who might possibly think that the only way to serve their country was to abandon it."—CARNOT to NAPOLEON, 24th Jan. 1814; *Mémoires sur Carnot*, p. 135.

ated; and Maison, who retired to Tournay, was watched by the Allies, whose headquarters were at Ath. Gorcum, however, having surrendered, and the blockading force, under the Prussian General Zielenaki, having reinforced the Prince of Saxe-Weimar, he advanced against the French general, who retired towards Quesnoy and Maubeuge. Nothing of moment occurred in this quarter till the 8th of March, when the prince made an attack on Maison's troops with twelve thousand men, and drove them from the positions they occupied in front of Courtray, under the cannon of Lille; so that, with the exception of Antwerp, Bergen-op-Zoom, Ypres, Condé, and Maubeuge, which were still in the hands of the French, the whole of Austrian Flanders was wrested from the arms of Napoleon.

7. But an important event occurred at this period in Holland, which deserves to be more particularly noticed, both on account of the admirable skill with which it was projected by the English general, and the combined gallantry on the part of the French, and remissness on that of the British, which rendered a successful attack ultimately abortive. This was the assault of BERGEN-OP-ZOOM by Sir Thomas Graham. That celebrated fortress, well known in the wars of the Low Countries, and strengthened by the successive labour of many centuries, was justly regarded by the Dutch as their principal bulwark on the side of the Netherlands. It was in every respect the worthy antagonist of Antwerp, to which it was directly opposite at the distance only of fifteen miles. On its works the famous Cohorn had exhausted all the resources of his art; and though the town is inconsiderable, containing not more than six thousand souls, the works were so extensive that they could only be adequately manned by a garrison of twelve thousand men. In addition to this, an immense system of mines and subterraneous works rendered all approach by an enemy to the ramparts hazardous in the extreme. The place is divided into two parts — the town,

properly so called, and the port — which are separated from each other by internal walls, but both included in the external ramparts. The former has three gates, those of Steenberg, Breda, and Antwerp; the latter but one, called the Water gate. The garrison, nominally four thousand five hundred strong, but of whom not more than two thousand seven hundred were effective, under General Bizanet, was inadequate to the manning of the extensive outworks, some of which were negligently guarded; some of the scarps were out of repair, and the hard frost which had so long prevailed had entirely frozen over the wet ditches lying in front of its ravelins and ramparts.

8. Encouraged by these circumstances, which seemed to offer a favourable opportunity for surprising the place, Graham, who had secret intelligence with several of the inhabitants, almost all of whom were seafaring people, heartily desirous of being delivered from the French yoke, in secret made his preparations for a general attack. He fixed the execution of the attempt for the 8th of March, being the day before the Prince of Orange's birthday. The troops, three thousand three hundred strong, were divided into four columns. The first, under General Lord Proby, mustering about a thousand bayonets, was ordered to attempt forcing an entrance by escalade between the Antwerp and Water gates; the second, under Colonel Morrice, twelve hundred strong, was to attack to the right of the Water gate; the third, led by Colonel Honey, consisting of six hundred men, was to distract the enemy by a feint at the Steenberg gate; and the fourth, headed by Skerret and Gore, consisting of eleven hundred men, to assault the mouth of the harbour, which was fordable at low water. For this reason, the attack was fixed for half-past ten o'clock at night. General Cooke commanded the whole. The troops employed in the four columns amounted in all to three thousand three hundred men in the assault, and six hundred in the feint. The instructions to

Generals Cooke and Gore, upon whom the weight of the assault would depend, were, as soon as they got to the top of the rampart, to incline towards each other, if possible unite, and immediately force open the Antwerp gate. Scaling-ladders of adequate height were provided for the men; the utmost secrecy was enjoined on the assaulting columns; no light was allowed among them; while that intrusted with the false attack on the Steenberg gate was instructed to raise as much noise, and keep up as sharp a rattle of musketry as possible.

9. These orders were punctually obeyed. Shortly before ten o'clock, a loud fire of musketry was heard at the Steenberg gate. It proceeded from the third column, which, having surprised the advanced guards and out-works, was arrested at the drawbridge of the chief moat and port of the rampart by a discharge of small-arms. Thither the garrison reserves were immediately directed, and the assailants repulsed with great loss. Meanwhile the fourth column successfully made its way into the harbour mouth, unobserved in the dark, and after winding its painful course among the numerous iron crow's-feet scattered in the bottom of the channel, at a quarter before eleven reached the top of the rampart without the loss of a man, and seized and forced open the Water gate. At the same time, detachments, under Colonel Carleton and General Skerret, were sent to the ramparts on the right and left, which were almost wholly undefended. As soon as the alarming progress of the assailants in this quarter was known, the remaining reserves of the garrison were directed to the bastions adjoining the Water gate; and after a sharp conflict Colonel Carleton, who commanded the detachment which moved to the right along the ramparts, was repulsed and driven back towards that entrance.

10. At the same time, however, Colonel Morrice, with his column, made his way across the ice, and reached the counterscarp undiscovered, near the Breda gate; but the garrison there being well prepared, a severe fire of

grape and musketry from the summit of the rampart prevented them from crossing the ditch, or getting into the body of the place. Hardly was the danger arrested in this quarter, when a still more formidable attack was made between the Antwerp and Water gates. This came from the Guards under Lord Proby, who, after being diverted from their original point of attack by the ice, which, weakened by the tide, gave way under their weight, had turned aside, and, following the foot of the wall to a place where the passage was practicable, had at length reached the summit of the rampart on the left of the Antwerp gate. The Guards were there formed under the immediate direction of General Cooke, and a detachment was sent on the one side to the Antwerp port, and on the other to gain intelligence of Skerret and Gore at the Water gate and harbour. The strength of the Antwerp gate, however, was such as to defy all their efforts to force it open; and though Gore's detachment, in the first instance, defeated a column of the garrison which advanced against it, yet the French reserves came up, and in the end overpowered it. But at this moment Morrice's column, which had been repulsed at its own point of attack, came round by the foot of the glacis, mounted the walls by Lord Proby's ladders, and formed on the ramparts to the left of the Guards.

11. To all appearance Bergen-op-Zoom was now taken; and with an ordinary garrison and governor it would have been so. Seven hundred and fifty men were in battle array on the ramparts adjoining the Water gate, and had possession of that gate, and fifteen hundred on those between it and the Antwerp gate: in all, they occupied fourteen of the sixteen fronts of the bastions of the place. The fortress was considered as so completely carried, that the detachment which had made the false attack on the Steenberg gate retired to their cantonments, and a brigade of Germans, which had advanced from Tholen at the first firing, countermarched and returned home. The French troops,

of no greater strength than the assailants, withdrew for the most part to the market-place, in the centre of the town, fully expecting to surrender at daybreak. But as the night wore on, matters essentially changed. The excessive cold benumbed the British troops, and chilled the first ardour of success; some of them broke into spirit-shops adjoining their position, and became intoxicated; no reinforcements were sent to them from without, and the French, as day dawned, discovered the small number of their antagonists, and perceived that one-third of them at the Water gate were separated from the remaining two-thirds on the bastions of the Antwerp gate. The governor, accordingly, directed his whole efforts, in the first instance, against Skerret's detachment on the bastions near the Water gate, and having driven them into a low situation, where they were exposed to a raking fire from two faces of the rampart, compelled them to lay down their arms, but not before Gore and Skerret had both fallen, bravely combating at the head of their troops. He then formed his whole force for an attack on the British, fifteen hundred strong, on the summit of the Antwerp bastions. The contest here was long and bloody; but at length General Cooke, having learned the destruction of Skerret and Gore's detachments, and finding his men wasting away without any chance of success, was compelled to surrender. In this brilliant though disastrous affair, the British lost above nine hundred killed and wounded, and eighteen hundred men laid down their arms, though they were next day exchanged by convention with the French governor.

12. Such was the termination of this extraordinary assault, doubly memorable, both from the circumstance that one of the strongest fortresses in the world had its ramparts carried by storm, when the governor was aware of the enemy's intention, and prepared to repel it, without any approaches, or attempt to breach the walls, by an assaulting force of little greater strength than the garrison; and from

the still more marvellous result, that this assaulting column, victorious on the ramparts, was in the end obliged to lay down its arms to an equal force of the enemy, but in possession of the guns of the place. It excited, accordingly, a vivid interest in the mind of Napoleon, who frequently recurred to it, both at Elba and St Helena. He admitted that Graham's plan was both daring and well conceived; and imputed the failure of the enterprise to the energy of the French governor, the courage of his troops, and the want of due support to the attacking columns. In truth, the slightest consideration must be sufficient to show, that it is to the last circumstance that the failure of this boldly conceived and gallant enterprise is principally to be ascribed. The English general had at his command nine thousand British or German troops, of whom not more than four thousand at the utmost were engaged in the assault. If a reserve of two thousand had been stationed near the walls, and advanced rapidly to the support of their comrades, the moment the ramparts of the Antwerp gate were taken, not a doubt can exist that the town must have fallen. Nay, if the troops who retired from the feigned attack on the Steenberg gate had been sent round to the support of Skerret and Gore by the Water gate, of which the latter had possession, it is probable the enterprise would have been crowned with success.

13. Of the ease with which fresh troops from without might have effected an entrance, even without blowing open that gate, we have decisive evidence in the fact, that Morrice's whole division, at one in the morning, ascended by Lord Proby's ladders, and formed on the summit without the loss of a man. But why was not a petard or a field-piece brought up, when the British were in possession of that gate, to blow it open, as has so often been done with such success in India? These considerations show, that the hero of Barossa, the gallant veteran who had first planted the British standards on the soil of France, injured

to a long course of triumphs, was on this occasion inspired with an undue contempt for his enemies, and forgot the first rule of tactics, that of having a reserve at hand, and vigorously advancing it to support the columns which had gained what, by such aid, might have been rendered a decisive success. On the other hand, the highest praise is due to the resolution and skill of the French governor, and to the intrepidity of his troops, who, undismayed by reverses which in general crush a garrison, found in their own energy the means of obviating them, and converting incipient disaster into ultimate victory. The conduct of both to the prisoners taken, and the readiness with which they agreed to and observed an armistice for burying the dead, proves that in this, as in all other cases, humanity is closely allied to the warlike virtues. From the whole events of this extraordinary assault, the young soldier may take a lesson of the highest daring and skill in designing an enterprise, of the most undaunted resolution and energy in repelling it. He may from them impress the momentous truth on his mind, that the best-conceived attacks may often in the end miscarry from want of prudence and foresight in executing them, or an undue contempt of the enemy against whom they are directed; and that, even in circumstances apparently hopeless, vigour and resolution will sometimes retrieve the most formidable disasters.

14. This bloody check paralysed the operations of the British in the Low Countries, whose efforts were thenceforward limited, with the assistance of an inconsiderable body of Prussians, to the blockade of Bergen-op-Zoom and Antwerp. Carnot continued to exert his great talents in the preparations for the defence of Antwerp, and made more than one excursion with part of the garrison from its walls; but as the siege was not resumed, there was no opportunity of putting his system to the test. In the middle of March, however, General Thielman brought up a powerful rein-

forcement of fifteen thousand Saxons to the support of the Duke of Saxe-Weimar. This raised the forces of the latter to thirty-seven thousand men, of whom twenty-seven thousand were disposable, with forty-one pieces of cannon. The opposing armies were now no longer equal; Maison was unable to keep the field, and retired under the cannon of Maubeuge and Lille, whither he was speedily followed by the Saxons under Thielman; upon which he threw a thousand men into the latter fortress, and retired into an intrenched camp under the cannon of the latter. A *coup-de-main*, attempted by the Duke of Saxe-Weimar on the 21st on Maubeuge, was repulsed, after three days' fighting, by the combined efforts of the little garrison and the brave inhabitants; while an incursion of Thielman to push his parties up to the gates of Lille, was defeated by Maison himself, two days afterwards. In fine, Flanders was lost to Napoleon; but the vigour and activity of the French general supplied the deficiency of numbers, and promised a tedious succession of sieges before the iron frontier of old France was on this side finally broken through.

15. From Italy, the accounts which Napoleon received at Rheims were less encouraging. It has already been mentioned that, in the end of December, Eugene Beauharnais had retired to the line of the Adige, which he occupied with thirty-six thousand combatants, of whom three thousand were horse; while the Austrian troops opposed to them under Bellegarde were above fifty thousand, besides the detached corps of Marshall, which observed Venice and Palma-Nuova in the rear [*ante*, Chap. LXXXIV. § 63]. This disproportion of force was the more alarming, that the forces of the Viceroy were for the most part new levies from the plain of Lombardy, on whom very little reliance could be placed to meet the shock of the Transalpine bayonets; while a considerable part of the Austrians were old troops, and they were all animated, from the recent successes in Germany, with the

very highest spirit. Eugene in consequence was already taking measures for a retreat, when the proclamation of Murat against Napoleon, already mentioned, on the 19th January, and his consequent occupation of the Roman States, by exposing his right flank and communications, rendered an immediate retrograde movement a matter of necessity.* He commenced his retreat, accordingly, from the Adige, and fell back to the Mincio, where he stationed his troops behind that classic stream, with the right resting on Mantua, and the left on Peschiera; while the Austrians, following him, took post in a corresponding line opposite, from Rivoli to the neighbourhood of Mantua.

16. No position could be more advantageous than the defensive one thus assumed by the Viceroy to resist the incursions of the Imperialists in his front; but it was by no means equally well protected against the army of Murat on his flank, which was now approaching so near as to give serious cause for uneasiness. This monarch, preferring the chance of a throne to duty and honour, had concerted his measures with the Austrian and English commanders; and after entering the Ecclesiastical States, with twenty-three thousand men, was to operate on the Po, in conjunction with a British expedition under Lord William Bentinck, which, embarking from Sicily,

* Murat's defection from Napoleon did not take place without the warmest remonstrance from his high-spirited queen. A year before his celebrated proclamation against his brother-in-law and benefactor appeared, she wrote to him:—"Your letters have caused me great pain. How! you can yield to another the glory of aiding the Emperor! You can commit the blunder of abandoning him before he has appointed a successor to you! No, my friend, I am sure you will not do that. Courage! I feel what you suffer. I share your annoyances and evils; but for the sake of that glory of which you are so jealous, I implore you to support him still."—CAROLINE to MURAT, 15th January 1813. This was shortly after the Moscow retreat, when Murat had left the command of the army to Eugene. How often are the counsels of women, in extreme circumstances, dictated by feeling and generous sentiments, more noble, and withal wiser, than those of men influenced chiefly by considerations of expedience or ambition!—BIGNON, xiii. 149.

received orders to make for Leghorn, and threaten Genoa and the maritime coasts of Napoleon's Italian dominions. Desirous of ridding himself of one enemy before he encountered another, Eugene adopted the bold, but yet, in his circumstances, prudent resolution of marching forward with a view to give battle to Bellegarde, and if possible throw him across the Adige before Murat's troops could reach the theatre of action. His resolution was just taken in time; for at that very moment a convention had been signed with Murat, who had advanced to Bologna and declared war against France, fixing on combined operations on both banks of the Po. Thus both parties at the same time were preparing offensive movements against each other; and their mutual and simultaneous execution of their designs brought on one of the most singular actions that ever was fought.

17. The two armies, assuming the offensive at the same time, mutually passed each other, and the advanced guard of the one, from the way in which they were marching, came first in contact with the rear-guard of the other. The Austrian right, early in the morning, crossed the Mincio at Borghetto, and drove back Grenier's division, which formed the French left, in the direction of Magnano. Eugene was advancing with his right to cross the same river, his right wing already over, when the cannonade on the left was heard. The moment that he received intelligence of what was there going forward, he conceived the bold idea of suddenly changing his front on both sides of the river, and assailing the enemy in flank while half across it, and in the course of their march little prepared for a battle. It was an exact repetition of Napoleon's perpendicular attack at Austerlitz, or Wellington's at Salamanca. An irregular action in consequence ensued, the French army advancing with great resolution in two lines, with their cavalry on the two flanks; the Austrians, surprised in their march, suddenly wheeling about and fronting the enemy wherever they came upon them. The

hottest fighting was around Valeggio, where several desperate charges of cavalry and bloody combats of infantry took place, which occasioned severe loss on both sides; but at the close of the day both parties maintained nearly the ground on which they had commenced the action, though upon the whole the advantage was rather on the side of the French, who accumulated a preponderating force on the decisive point at Valeggio, and made fifteen hundred prisoners. Three thousand were killed and wounded on both sides. On the day following, the Viceroy retreated across the Mincio at Goito, and Bellegarde immediately pushed over some divisions in pursuit. But they were so rudely handled, although they gained some success in the outset at Borghetto, Salo, and Gardone, that the Austrian general, after a few days' skirmishing, withdrew his troops entirely across the Mincio; alleging as an excuse, that the King of Naples was not as yet in a condition to take his part in the proposed operations.

18. But although success was thus balanced on the Mincio, affairs were rapidly going to wreck in other quarters; and everything presaged the speedy expulsion of the French from the Italian peninsula. The castle of Verona surrendered to the Austrians on the 14th February; Ancona, after a siege of twenty-five days, and a bombardment of forty-eight hours, capitulated to Murat's forces on the 16th; and the Italian troops in Eugene's service, despairing of the cause of Napoleon, and unable to endure the fatigues and hardships of a winter campaign, deserted in such numbers, that it was found indispensable to station the few that remained in the fortresses of Peschiera and Mantua. The arrival, at Eugene's headquarters, of nearly all the French in the service of the King of Naples, after his declaration of war against Napoleon, was far from counterbalancing this great defalcation; and the Viceroy, unable to maintain his extended position on the Mincio, drew nearer to the Po, and brought up his whole reserves from the Milanese states. He still, however, remain-

ed firm to the Emperor Napoleon, and refused the most brilliant offers, on the part of the Allies, if he would desert his benefactor.* Meanwhile Pisa was threatened by Pignatelli's division, forming part of Murat's army, which, being now disengaged from Ancona, was able to invade in force the Tuscan provinces. Its governor, Pouchain, upon that summoned seven hundred of the garrison of Leghorn to his support; and as this entirely denuded the maritime districts, Fouché, who held a general commission from the Emperor, in his quality of governor of Rome, to arrange the affairs of central Italy, concluded a convention with the Neapolitan general, in virtue of which the citadels of Pisa, Leghorn, and Lucca, in the Tuscan territories, were delivered up to the Allies; and the garrisons of Volterra, Civita-Vecchia, Florence, and the castle of St Angelo, were to be withdrawn, and transported by sea to the south of France.

19. The old revolutionist, the author of the *mitrillades* at Lyons, the arch-director of Napoleon's police, had his own views in this convention; it led to a secret conference between him and Murat, a few days after, at Modena, in which he congratulated the Neapolitan monarch upon having extricated himself so adroitly, by joining the Coalition, from the wreck of his imperial brother-in-law's fortune, and persuaded him to issue his celebrated proclamation against Napoleon. He also contrived to extract from him, before the meeting broke up, a hundred and seventy thousand francs (6,800) of arrears of pay due to him as governor of Rome, and three hundred thousand francs (£12,000), in bills of exchange, for the cession of his rights on the duchy of Otranto. Having accomplished this object, the wary statesman next proceeded, with all possible expedition, across the Alps into the south of France,

* "The King of Sardinia said to the Prince Stephanie of Baden that they had proposed to the Viceroy to recognise him as King of Italy, if he would separate himself from the Emperor; but that he had rejected the proposal."—*Rapport Confidentiel de M. Bignon à l'Empereur*, 9th December 1813. Bignon, xiii. 169.

and thence cautiously drew near to Paris, anxious to have a hand in the convulsion in that capital which he foresaw was approaching; hastening, like the vulture, to the spot where revolutionary cupidity was to feast on the carcass of imperial greatness.*

20. Meanwhile Lord William Bentinck, at the head of a considerable expedition from Sicily, amounting to seven thousand men, of whom, however, only one-half were British soldiers, set sail from Palermo on the last day of February, and arrived off Leghorn on the 8th of March. The troops were immediately landed, the French garrison having been previously transported to the south of France, in virtue of the convention concluded with Murat; and the English general immediately

* "I had a secret conference with Murat at Modena. There I made him sensible, since he had a decisive part to take, that he ought to declare himself. 'If you,' said I, 'had as much firmness in your character as you have noble sentiments in your heart, you would be more powerful in Italy than the Coalition.' He still hesitated; I then communicated to him *my most recent news from Paris*. Determined by their import, he intrusted to me the proclamation which he soon afterwards issued against Napoleon.

Soon after, I had a secret interview with Eugene, at the time when he received the intelligence of the Emperor's recent success over Blücher at Champagne. 'Return to Eugene,' said the Emperor to the aide-de-camp who bore the intelligence, 'tell him how I have settled with these gentlemen here: they are a set of rascals whom I will put to flight with strokes of the whip.' All the world at the Viceroy's headquarters were in transports at this intelligence: I took Eugene aside, and told him such rodomontade could impose on none but enthusiastic fools: that all reasonable persons saw the imminent danger in which the imperial throne was placed; and that it was not the nation which was wanting to Napoleon, but Napoleon, by his despotism, who had destroyed the spirit of the nation. I gave some good counsel to Eugene, and set out for Lyons; and there, as I saw the spirit of resistance was alive only in the public functionaries, I announced that a million of men were pouring into France, the defection of the King of Naples, and that it was impossible to reinstate affairs but by a great political change. I soon saw that the authorities had secret instructions regarding me, and in effect I was soon after obliged to set out for Valence and Dauphiné, instead of Paris, the only destination to which I was at that juncture inclined." — *Mémoires de Fouché*, ii. 263, 275.

issued a proclamation, in which he called on the Tuscans to rise and join his troops in liberating Italy from the oppressors. At the same time the hereditary prince of Sicily, who accompanied the expedition, issued of his own authority a proclamation, in which he openly brought forward his claims to the throne of Naples, and announced to the Sicilian troops in the expedition that he was about to assert them by force of arms. This injudicious and ill-timed effusion immediately gave umbrage to Murat, who had declared for the Allies only in order to preserve that throne; and it not only had the effect of making him suspend his operations on the Po against the Viceroy, and concentrate his troops in order to be ready for any contingency, but produced such an effect on his mind, as had well-nigh thrown him back again into the arms of Napoleon.

21. Bentinck had an interview with him, and insisted upon the evacuation of Tuscany by the Neapolitan troops; but he failed in appeasing his wrath or gaining that object, and a rupture seemed inevitable, when it was fortunately prevented by the seasonable interposition of the British government, who disavowed the hereditary prince's proclamation, and relinquished the demand for the evacuation of Tuscany. Meanwhile the English general, finding combined operations with the King of Naples in his present temper impossible, moved his troops from Pisa to Lucca, in order to co-operate with the second division of the expedition, which had landed in the gulf of La Spezia, in a general attack on Genoa. It did not take place, however, till after the fall of Napoleon; and though entirely successful, as will afterwards appear, was accompanied by declarations on the part of Lord William, which proved in no small degree embarrassing in the final settlement of Europe at the Congress of Vienna.

22. Several minor operations at this period demonstrated again, for the hundredth time, the inability of the Neapolitan soldiers to withstand the shock of the Transalpine bayonets.

Murat, having pushed forward a brigade under Colonel Metzko to Casal-Maggiore on the Po, commenced the construction of a bridge there; but Metzko was surprised three days afterwards by Bonnernain, with a division of Eugene's men, driven from the place, and the whole boats which had been collected were taken. Murat upon this retired; and Eugene, having pushed General Grenier with his division, entirely French, across the river at Borgoforte, chased the Neapolitans with great loss from Guastalla; and next day the victors appeared before Parma, and routed the allied troops which occupied it. In this affair, Metzko's Neapolitan brigade was entirely dispersed; sixteen hundred men, chiefly Austrians, were taken in the town of Parma; and Grenier, following up his success before the enemy could recover from their consternation, made himself master of Reggio, and threw the Neapolitans back to the foot of the Apennines. Murat, however, discovering some days afterwards that this town was only occupied by three thousand men, pushed forward his advanced guard, composed entirely of Austrians, and carried Rubiera, where a detachment was placed, by assault, driving the garrison back to Reggio. Encouraged by this success, he advanced to the attack of the latter town; and Severoli, who commanded the troops which occupied it, had the imprudence to deliver a pitched battle before its walls, against a German force nearly three times superior, in which, after a gallant resistance, he was worsted. Having been obliged to leave the field severely wounded, his successor in the command, Rambourg, withdrew into the town, and soon after entered into a convention with Murat for its evacuation. The King of Naples, in consequence, entered Reggio on the following day, and pushed his vanguard on to Parma; but there the advance of the Neapolitans was arrested, by the proclamation of the hereditary prince of Sicily already mentioned. The concentration of the Neapolitan troops in Tuscany enabled Eugene again to assume a menacing aspect on

the Mincio against Bellegarde; and the whole remainder of March passed away, without any enterprise of note taking place on the part of any of the three armies which now contended for the empire of Italy.

23. Events of no ordinary importance had also at this period occurred at Lyons and its vicinity, where Augereau had been left, as already mentioned, to make head against the Austrian corps of Count Bubna. It has been noticed, also, that Geneva was occupied by the Austrian commander in the beginning of January without resistance; and such was the state of destitution in which the military force and fortresses of France at that period were, that if they had pushed on, they might with ease have made themselves masters of Lyons and the whole course of the Upper Rhone, before the middle of that month. The progress of the Austrians, however, was so slow, that it was not till the 14th of January that their advanced posts even appeared before Lyons; and on that very day Augereau arrived from Paris to take the command. At that period there were only seventeen hundred regular troops in the garrison, inadequately supported by some thousand National Guards. Despairing of arresting the attack of the enemy with such feeble means, Augereau proceeded on to the south, to Valence, in order to hasten the armaments and organise troops in that direction; leaving General Musnier in command of the slender garrison at Lyons, with instructions to retard the enemy as much as possible, but not to expose the city to the horrors of an assault.

24. The imminent danger that Lyons, the second city in the empire, would speedily fall before the Austrian general, who had twenty thousand men around its walls, joined to the urgent representations of Augereau as to the total inadequacy of the means at his disposal for its defence, induced Napoleon to take the most vigorous measures for its relief. Augereau sent a thousand men in post carriages from Valence, who arrived during the night of the 18th; and reinforcements hav-

ing come in from other quarters soon after, the Austrians, who were ignorant of the real weakness of the garrison, and had not heavy artillery to undertake a siege, retired to Montluel on the road to Geneva, where they remained inactive till the end of January. This retrograde movement, coupled with the daily arrival of some hundred conscripts from the depots in the south and west within their walls, revived the spirit of the Lyonese, who in the first instance had despaired altogether of the possibility of resistance; and the National Guard soon raised the effective force in the garrison to ten thousand men. The Austrians now gave up all thoughts of an immediate attack on Lyons; and, extending themselves from Geneva towards the valleys of Savoy, entered Chambéry after some successful combats, and got possession of the well-known and romantic defile of Echelles, the only direct though steep and rugged entrance from the plain of the Rhone into the Alpine heights. At the same time Bubna pushed a considerable body of troops towards Chalons-sur-Saone, made himself master of that town, and the whole country between the Aisne and the Saone. He everywhere disarmed the inhabitants, and applied the resources of the district to the supply of the allied forces.

25. The efforts of Napoleon, however, to reinforce the army at Lyons at length produced the desired effect. A considerable body of troops was drawn from Suchet's army in Catalonia, transported by post to Nismes, and thence forwarded, with every sabre and bayonet which could be collected in Languedoc, to the threatened city. These great reinforcements raised the troops under Augereau, who had now re-established his headquarters in Lyons, to twenty-one thousand men, who were divided into two corps, one of which, twelve thousand strong, under the command of the marshal in person, acted on the right bank of the Rhone, while the other, of nine thousand, led by Marchand, operated on the left. This force was much greater than any which Bubna could bring against it; and as

this accumulation on the side of Lyons occurred at the very time when Napoleon enjoined a vigorous offensive to Augereau, after his own defeat of Blucher, and resumption of operations against the Grand Army at Montereau, in order to threaten its flanks and rear, the marshal immediately commenced active hostilities on both sides of the Rhone. Gradually the Austrians were forced back on the road from Lyons to Geneva; Bourg and Nantua were recovered; Marchand forced the pass of Echelles after a bloody conflict, and drove the enemy in confusion to Chambéry, where, nearly surrounded, they were glad to escape to Aix on the lake of Bourget, between that town and Geneva, where they took up a strong position, with the lake on one flank, the precipitous mountains on the other, and a morass in front. There, however, they were soon attacked by the French, now flushed with victory; the position was carried, Aix taken, and the Austrians, after several unsuccessful combats, were thrown back to the heights in front of Geneva.

26. Considerable as these successes were, they were very far from either answering the expectations, or carrying out the views of the French Emperor. It was on the banks of the Seine, and not either in Savoy or on those of the Rhone, that the contest was to be decided. Napoleon intended Augereau to threaten the flanks and rear of the Grand Army at the very time that he assailed it in front; and every movement on that marshal's part was therefore eccentric, and to be deprecated, which did not bring him close upon Schwartzberg's rear. He was no sooner informed, accordingly, of the direction of the French forces from Lyons into Savoy, than he wrote to his lieutenant that it was towards Geneva and the Pays de Vaud that his march should be turned, as they lay on the communications of the Grand Army; that it was by massing his troops together, and acting at one point, that great things were to be done; and that he should forget he was fifty-six years old, and think only of his brilliant

days at Castiglione [*ante*, Chap. xx. § 106].*

27. Augereau, however, was fearful of engaging his troops, of whom not more than one-half were thoroughly disciplined and experienced, in a distant warfare in the defiles of the Jura; and he remained almost inactive till the end of February, content with the successes he had already gained on the side of Savoy—a degree of torpor, considering the vital interests which were then at stake in the headquarters of Schwartzberg's army, and the terror which this movement from Lyons had already excited amongst the Austrian generals, which the French military historians may well denominate fatal. Meanwhile the allied sovereigns, as already mentioned [*ante*, Chap. lxxxvi. § 5], directed the reserves of the Grand Army towards Chalons and Mâcon, in the direction of Lyons, and the formation of an army, to be called the Army of the South, forty thousand strong, on the banks of the Saône; and Napoleon, to counterbalance this great detachment, ordered Suchet to reinforce Augereau with ten thousand additional veterans from the army of Catalonia, and Prince Borghese to send eight thousand, with all possible expedition, across Mont Cenis to Lyons; so that, by the beginning of April, the

contending armies on the Rhone would each amount to nearly fifty thousand men.

28. Roused at length from his ruinous inactivity at Lyons by the repeated exhortations of the Emperor, Augereau, in the beginning of March, put himself in motion in the direction evidently pointed out by the strategical operations going forward on the banks of the Seine. Dessaix and Marchand made a combined attack on the Austrian positions in front of Geneva; and, after a series of obstinate engagements, drove them back into that town, with the loss of a thousand men. Fort Ecluse was captured next day; and the victorious French, instead of following up their successes by the capture of Geneva, or extending themselves along the margin of the Leman lake, were directed by Jourdan to attack the corps of Lichtenstein, which lay in the neighbourhood of Besançon. This diversion of force saved Geneva, and extricated Bubna from great difficulties. Meanwhile the powerful reserves which the Allies were directing towards the Saône, under Bianchi, from the rear of the Grand Army, compelled Augereau to concentrate his forces, and direct them to the right bank of the Rhone, in order to make head against them and cover Lyons.

* "Count Bubna has not ten thousand men under his command to oppose to you—miserable troops, who will disappear like a mist before the sun at the aspect of your old bands from Catalonia. France and Switzerland have their eyes upon you; the inhabitants of the Pays de Vaud and Argovia have sixteen battalions of militia ready to range themselves on your side; the cantons of St Gall, Soleure, and a part of Zurich, only await your standards to declare themselves in favour of the French. Forget that you are fifty-six years old, and think only of your brilliant days at Castiglione." And a few days after he wrote, "The Emperor is not satisfied with your dispositions, in pushing detachments in this manner wherever the enemy has forces, instead of striking at his heart. He directs me in consequence to reiterate the orders you have already three times received. You are to *unite all your forces into one column*, and march either into the Pays de Vaud or the Jura, according as the enemy is in most force in the one or the other. It is by concentrating forces in masses that great successes are obtained. I have the best reasons for assuring you

that the enemy is seriously alarmed at the movements he supposes you are to make, and which he was bound to expect; he would be too happy if he could assure himself that you would merely send out detachments in different directions, all the while remaining yourself quiet at Lyons. It is by putting yourself at the head of your troops, as the Emperor wishes, and acting vigorously, that you can alone effect a great and useful diversion. The Emperor conceives it to be altogether immaterial that the battalions of reserve from Nîmes are ill-clothed and equipped, since they have muskets and bayonets. He desires me to tell you that the corps of Gerard, which has done such great things under his eyes, is composed of conscripts half naked. He has at this moment four thousand National Guards in his army, with round hats, with peasants' coats and waistcoats, and without knapsacks, armed with all sorts of muskets, on whom he puts the greatest value; he only wishes he had thirty thousand of them."—DUKE DE FELTRE (CLARKE) to M. LE DUC DE CASTIGLIONE, Feb. 22 and 23, 1814. *Victoires et Conquêtes*, xxiii. 218, 220.

With this view, he collected the bulk of his men from both banks of the river at Lons-le-Saulnier, and gradually fell back towards Lyons, which he re-entered on the 9th March. The exposed situation of an Austrian detachment at Mâcon, induced him, two days afterwards, to order an attack by Musnier on that town; but Bianchi, advancing in person to its support, opened a warm fire from thirty pieces of artillery on the attacking column, and they were defeated with the loss of seven hundred men and two cannon. Disconcerted by this check, the French forces fell back towards Lyons, closely followed by the allied troops, as well in the Jura as in the valley of the Saone; and on the 18th, the Austrians, under Prince Hesse-Homburg, forty-three thousand strong, made a general attack on the French line. Bianchi and Wimpffen, with twenty-two thousand,* assailed their right, while the Prince of Wied-Runket, at the head of twenty-one thousand, turned their left by the road of Beaudeau. The French combated with great bravery, and in some points, particularly Lage-Longsart, gained, in the first instance, considerable advantages. But Wimpffen restored the combat, and Wied-Runket having threatened their left, Augereau retreated to Limonet, on the road to Lyons, with hardly any hope of preserving that city from the enemy.

29. Determined, however, to retard the Allies as much as possible, in order to give time for the arrival of the great reinforcements, eighteen thousand strong, ordered in the beginning of March from Catalonia and Turin—above two thousand of which had already come up—Augereau took post across the great road near Limonet, barring all access to Lyons on that side. Musnier's division was established near Limonet, on the heights between the Saone and the Lyons road, and from thence the line extended by the plateau to Dardilly. The Prince of Hesse-Homburg made the following dispositions. Bianchi, after passing

the defile of Dorieux, was to form between Dommartin and Salvagny, and push on direct for Lyons; Wimpffen was to support Bianchi, as soon as sufficient room was made for him to deploy; while Mumb, at the head of a brigade, was to follow the crest of the ridge which extends towards Lyons from Chasselay, and threaten the rear of the enemy. The whole Austrian force was forty-three thousand one hundred and eighty-five strong. All these attacks proved successful. At noon, Musnier, seeing Mumb's brigade rapidly gaining the ridge in his rear, conceived himself cut off, and fell back towards Lyons; while Bianchi, without much difficulty, made himself master of the plateau of Dardilly, and extending his lines along its summit, soon gained room for Wimpffen to pass the defile in his rear, and form on his right. The battle seemed already gained, as the French right and centre had abandoned their position, and were falling back towards Lyons, when the aspect of affairs was unexpectedly changed by two thousand foot and three hundred horse, who made so vigorous an attack on Wied-Runket, near the road to Moulins, that they not only arrested his advance, but gave time for Augereau to rally his other divisions, in full retreat towards Lyons, and bring them back to the charge. A furious combat now took place along the whole line, and continued with various success till nightfall: but at the close of the action the progress of the enemy, though not decisive, was distinctly marked on all sides; and Augereau, despairing of being able any longer to defend Lyons, evacuated the city at midnight, taking the road to Valence, in order to gain the line of the Isère. Next day the Austrians entered, and the second city in the empire saw the allied colours waving on its walls.

30. In these actions, from the 16th to the 20th inclusive, the Allies lost two thousand nine hundred men, killed, wounded, and prisoners. The French loss, as they were defending positions, did not exceed two thousand; but they left behind them twenty-

* 18,288 infantry and 3714 cavalry.—*Oesterreiche Militärtafelchrift*, viii. 116, 117.

two pieces of cannon, and large military stores of all kinds, including twenty-four thousand cannon-balls, in Lyons. The effects of this conquest were immense. It immediately liberated Bubna, who had for three weeks been nearly besieged by the French in Geneva; Marchand, so recently victorious, was obliged to retire in haste to Grenoble, closely followed by the Austrians, who retaliated upon him all that they had recently suffered in their own retreat. To complete their misfortunes, the united French force, now reduced to twenty thousand combatants, had hardly taken post behind the Isère — thus abandoning entirely the passes of the Simplon and Mont Cenis, the great gates from France into Italy — when the crushing intelligence reached Augereau of the capture of Bordeaux by the British, accompanied by a pressing order from Napoleon, that six of the ten thousand men who had been promised him from Suchet's army, should be directed to the reinforcement of Soult. This last blow broke the spirit of the veteran marshal. Deeming the cause of Napoleon now all but hopeless, he wrote to Eugene, informing him of the full extent of the Emperor's disasters, and conjuring him, in the name of their common country, to hasten with his yet unbroken army across the Alps, and if he could not avert its misfortunes, at least share its fate. Meanwhile, he stationed his troops in echelon down the line of the Rhone, from Valence to the Pont St Esprit, in order to establish an interior line of communication with Marshal Soult, and be in a situation to join him before the Prince of Hesse-Homburg could stretch across the south of France to unite with the victorious standards of Wellington on the banks of the Garonne.

31. While the empire of Napoleon was thus crumbling away in Flanders, Italy, and on the Rhone, disasters attended with still more serious consequences, as leading directly to his dethronement, had occurred in the south of France. The concluding and bloody operations of Wellington and Soult on the Nive, already detailed [*ante*,

Chap. LXXXIII.], were succeeded by a considerable rest to both armies. This, however, was far from being a period of repose to Wellington himself. On the contrary, his difficulties seemed to multiply even in the midst of his triumphs; and he never had more obstacles to encounter than now, when they seemed to be all vanishing before him. The noble and heroic system of protection to others, and self-denial to himself, by which, in the eloquent words of an eyewitness, "order and tranquillity profound, on the edge of the very battle-field, attended the march of the civilised army which passed the Bidassoa," necessarily, when a hundred thousand men were to be provided for, occasioned an extraordinary strain on the British finances. Such were the demands on the English treasury at this period, — from their having come under an engagement to give £11,000,000 sterling in subsidies to the allied powers during a single year, besides arming nearly the whole of their vast warlike arrays, maintaining the contest at once in the south of France, Flanders, and Italy, and supporting a most expensive war by sea and land against America, — that it was with the utmost difficulty that government could find the means of answering them, even out of the boundless resources, and sustained by the now exalted spirit, of England.

32. Above all, the difficulty of furnishing *specie* in sufficient quantity for an army of such magnitude, which paid everything in ready money, and levied no contributions on the conquered territory, especially at a time when the prodigious armies on the Rhine had absorbed nearly the whole circulating medium of the Continent, had become excessive. The utmost that government could furnish was £100,000 in gold and silver coin a month; but though this steady drain was felt as so severe at home, that the under-secretary of state, Colonel Bunbury, was sent out to endeavour to reduce it, yet it was very far indeed from meeting Wellington's necessities. Some of his muleteers were two years in arrear; the soldiers, in

general, had been seven months without pay; the debt owing by the English authorities in every part of the country was immense, although in the last year £2,572,000 had passed in specie through the military chest; and the creditors, long kept out of their money, were becoming importunate. Sixteen thousand of the Peninsular troops could not be brought into France, because there were no funds either to feed or pay them. Extraordinary obstacles were opposed by the democratic Spanish authorities to the establishment of hospitals in the rear, even when thirty thousand men, wounded during the campaign in their service, required attendance; and although great benefits had been experienced by declaring St Jean de Luz a free port, yet the French too were constantly receiving supplies at Bayonne by sea; and, strange to say, the mistress of the ocean was unable to check the coasting trade of a contemptible naval force of the enemy.

33. So forcibly were the British government impressed at this period with the enormous expense at which the contest in the south of France was carried on, that, deeming the independence of the Peninsula now secured, and conceiving that the decisive point in the struggle which remained was to be found nearer Paris than the banks of the Adour or the Garonne, they seriously entertained, and transmitted to Wellington a proposal, first suggested by the Emperor of Russia, for transporting his army by sea to the Netherlands, and causing it to form the right wing of the vast array which, from the Alps to the ocean, was now invading France. It must be admitted that this project presented, at first sight, several advantages. The independence of the Peninsula appeared to be secured, and the black ingratitude of its democratic rulers held out no inducement towards making any further efforts in its behalf; the vicinity of Flanders to the British shores would enable government to augment at pleasure the army to almost any amount; an act of parliament had recently passed, authorising three-fourths of the militia

to volunteer for foreign service, and there could be little doubt they would crowd round Wellington's standards on the Scheldt; while the defenceless condition of the French barrier towns, and total absence of any considerable military force on the frontiers of Picardy, seemed to promise to the Peninsular hero, as the reward of his toils, a triumphant and almost unresisted march to Paris.

34. But while Wellington, with his usual patriotic spirit, professed his willingness to serve his king and country wherever government might direct, he justly advanced in reply, that with a British force never exceeding thirty thousand men in the field, he had maintained his ground in the Peninsula against two hundred thousand French, and finally driven them over the Pyrenees; that the frontier now invaded by him was the most vulnerable quarter in which France could be assailed; that if he could put twenty thousand Spaniards into the field, he would take Bayonne—if forty thousand, he would have his posts on the Garonne; that the latter event would shake Napoleon incomparably more than if forty thousand British troops were besieging the Dutch fortresses; and that the consequence of withdrawing the British army would be, that a hundred thousand veteran troops, of a quality superior to any the Allies had yet had to deal with, would be at once put at Napoleon's disposal to act against their armies on the Seine and the Rhone, besides an equal force of reserves now forming in the southern provinces, and who, possessing an interior line of communication, could be brought into action long before the British could be brought up, after their shipment and landing, on the other side; and that their army, by such a changing of the scene of action, would for the next four months, big with the fate of the world, be put entirely *hors-de-combat*. These considerations prevailed with the English government, and they resolved to follow their general's advice as to continuing the war in the south of France; though a considerable part of the reinforcements

destined for his army were turned aside into Holland, and formed the gallant though ill-fated corps which suffered so fearfully on the ramparts of Bergen-op-Zoom.

35. But if Wellington's difficulties were great, those of his antagonist were still greater; for he had to contend on behalf of a falling cause and a tottering empire; to restrain treachery, and yet avoid severity; to enforce requisitions, and not exasperate selfishness; to inspire military spirit, and avoid exciting civil indignation. To do these things perfectly had now become impossible. The hour of punishment and retribution had struck, and no human power could avert its bitterness. In vain he exerted himself to the utmost to collect resources, and assemble a respectable military force to resist the farther advance of the English general; all his efforts were like rolling up the stone of Sisyphus. The urban cohorts indeed were readily formed as the means of creating a police force, and the conscripts obeyed the imperial authorities, and repaired to the points assigned for their organisation. But the people were sullen and apathetic: the whole class of proprietors were openly opposed to the war, to which they saw no end, and from the continuance of which they could not derive any possible advantage. They feared victory even more than defeat; for from it they anticipated nothing but a fresh series of warlike aggressions on the part of their chief. The Royalist committees were already active in the rear, and preparing to take advantage of the crisis which all foresaw was approaching, to re-establish the exiled family; and, above all, the forced requisitions excited universal indignation, and inclined the peasantry, at all hazards, to desire the termination of so execrable a system. France now felt what it was to make war maintain war: her people experienced the practical working of that system, which, when applied to others, had so long been the source, to themselves, of pride and exultation. The people of Béarn learned what it was, as so many pro-

vinces of Spain had so long done, to feed, clothe, lodge, and pay an army of eighty thousand of Napoleon's soldiers. Such was the magnitude of the requisitions, and so unbounded the exasperation produced by them, especially standing as they did in bright contrast to the strict discipline of the English army, and the invariable payment for every article taken by them, that numbers of the peasantry passed with their horses, carts, and implements of husbandry into the British lines, to obtain an enemy's protection from the rapine of their own government; and one of the commissioners at the moment wrote from Bayonne—"The English general's policy, and the good discipline he maintains, does us more harm than ten battles. *Every peasant wishes to be under his protection.*"

36. Soult employed the two months of respite to warlike operations which was afforded by the excessive rigour of the season, after the battle of the Nive, in the middle of December, in diligently instructing his conscripts in the military art; and, under the shelter of the ramparts of Bayonne, he was able to effect this without molestation. But the necessities of the Emperor, after the battle of La Rothière, compelled him to make a large draft from the army of the south; and, in the beginning of February, the French general had the mortification to receive an order which compelled him to send off two divisions of infantry, two thousand detached veterans, and six regiments of dragoons, to reinforce the host which was combating on the banks of the Seine. About the same time, reinforcements to the amount of five thousand men, including twelve hundred horse, arrived at Wellington's headquarters from England; and the whole cavalry of the army, which had been sent back, from want of forage, to the banks of the Ebro, was now, with the returning spring, brought up again to those of the Adour. Thus Soult's effective troops in the field, after deducting the garrison of Bayonne and other forts which he was obliged to defend, were reduced to forty thousand men;

and a considerable part of this force was composed of conscripts who, though disciplined, were not inured to war, and could not be relied upon either to withstand the fatigues or confront the dangers of the serious struggle which was impending. On the other hand, the Anglo-Portuguese troops, by the morning state on 13th February, when the advance commenced, amounted to seventy thousand men, of whom ten thousand were cavalry, and the Spaniards were thirty thousand more: in all a hundred thousand, with a hundred and forty pieces of cannon—a prodigious force to be collected at one point, under the command of a single general; and, considering the discipline and spirit of the greater part of the troops, and the talents and experience of their chief, the most formidable army which had ever been put forth by the power of England.

37. The security which the English general felt in commencing his military operations was much augmented by the rejection, by the Cortes at Madrid, of the treaty of Valençay, insidiously extorted at this period from the weak and captive Ferdinand. This resolution gave, as well it might, the highest satisfaction to Wellington; demonstrating in the clearest manner, that with whatever republican ambition the government of Spain, elected under the impulse of universal suffrage, might be infected, they had not yet forgotten their patriotic resistance to Gallic aggression, nor were prepared to accept a despot from the prisons of a desolating conqueror. He was not a little embarrassed, however, shortly after, by an event as unforeseen as it was perplexing, and which at once involved him in those difficult questions concerning the future government of France, which the allied sovereigns even felt themselves unable to determine, and which, by common consent, they left to time and the course of events to resolve.

38. The partisans of the Bourbons in La Vendée and the western provinces had for some time past been in secret communication with the English general, although he took the utmost pains

to guard them against committing themselves prematurely, not merely from the total uncertainty in which he was as to the intentions of the allied sovereigns with respect to the future government of France, but from the advice which he had given the British cabinet, to accede to any peace with Napoleon which might afford to the rest of Europe reasonable security against aggression.* Matters, however, were at length brought to a crisis by the Duke d'Angoulême suddenly arriving at headquarters. In the critical circumstances which ensued, Wellington acted with his wonted judgment and delicacy. While showing the most marked attention to the illustrious prince, he insisted upon his remaining incognito till the intentions of the allied sovereigns were distinctly pronounced; advised him, for the interests of his royal house, "neither to anticipate public opinion nor precipitate matters;" and would not allow him to leave St Jean de Luz to accompany the army in active operations. At the same time, when he perceived, after

* "The people here all agree in one opinion: viz. that the sentiment throughout France is the same as I have found it here—an earnest desire to get rid of Buonaparte and his government, from a conviction that, as long as he governs, they will have no peace. The language common to all is, that although the grievous hardships and oppression under which they suffer are intolerable, they dare not have the satisfaction even of complaining: that, on the contrary, they are obliged to pretend to rejoice, and that they are allowed only to lament in secret and in silence their hard fate. They say that the Bourbons are as unknown in France as the princes of any other sovereign house in Europe. I am convinced, more than ever, that Napoleon's power stands upon corruption, and that he has no adherents in France but the principal officers of his army, and the *employés civils* of his government, with some of the new proprietors. Notwithstanding this, I recommend your Lordship to make peace with him, if you can acquire all the objects which you have a right to expect. All the powers require peace even more than France; and it would not do to found a new system of war upon the speculations of any individual, on what he sees and hears in a corner of France. If Buonaparte becomes moderate, he is probably as good a sovereign as we can desire in France: if he does not, we shall probably have another war in a few years."—WELLINGTON to LORD BATHURST, 21st Nov. 1815; GURWOOD, xxii. 304, 305.

the advance of the British to Orthes, that the spirit of the country was more openly manifesting itself, he made no scruple in informing the British government of the change, and apprising them, that "any decided declaration from them against Napoleon would spread such a flame through the country, as would infallibly overturn him."

39. Previous to commencing active operations, there was one growing evil in his rear which it was the peculiar care of Wellington to abate, and which his mingled firmness and humanity succeeded in removing. The mountainous districts of Baigorri and Bidarray, at the foot of the Pyrenees, had suffered severely from the rapine of Mina's troops before they were sent back into Spain; and several able French generals, especially General Harispe, who was a native of that district, had in consequence succeeded in rousing a national war among the peasants of those valleys, which did very serious injury to the allied army. To crush this dangerous example, which it had been the grand object of the English general to prevent, he issued a proclamation to the people in the French and Basque languages, which happily, on this painful and delicate subject, steered the middle course between savage cruelty and ruinous lenity. Without forbidding the peasants to take up arms to defend their country—as Napoleon had so often done in Spain, Italy, and the Tyrol—and denouncing the penalty of death in case of disobedience, he contented himself with declaring that, if they wanted to be soldiers, they must leave their homes and join the regular armies; in which case they should, if taken, be treated as prisoners of war, and their dwellings and families protected; but that he would

not permit them with impunity to play the part alternately of a peaceable inhabitant and of a soldier.*

40. In this proclamation there was nothing in the slightest degree unjust: it trenched on none of the natural rights of man to defend his country. It merely denounced as pirates and robbers those who, claiming and enjoying the benefits of hostile discipline, insidiously turned their arms against those to whom they owed these blessings, and neither yielded the submission which is the condition of protection to the citizen, nor assumed the profession which gives the privileges of the soldier. Perhaps it was impossible on this difficult subject, fraught with such dreadful consequences on either side, to steer the middle course more happily. The effect corresponded to such intentions, for the insurrection was speedily appeased; and though Wellington desired his officers to inform the people that, if any further outrages continued, he would treat them as the French had done the villages in Spain and Portugal—that is, he would destroy the houses and hang the inhabitants—yet it was not necessary to carry any of these menaces into effect.

41. Although Soult's regular force in the field was little more than half of what his adversary could bring to bear against him, yet his situation, with the advantage of the now strong and fully-armed fortified town of Bayonne, at the confluence of the Nive and Adour, to protect his right, was such as in a great degree to counterbalance the inequality of numbers. The fortress itself, which could be rendered in great part inaccessible by inundations of the Lower Adour, could only be besieged in form by crossing that river, and breaking ground on the right

country which my armies occupy. They ought to know that I have done everything in my power to fulfil the engagements which I have undertaken towards the country; but I give them warning that, if they persist in making war, they must join the enemy's ranks and become soldiers: they must not remain in their villages."—*Proclamation by WELLINGTON*, 28th January 1814; GURWOOD, xi. 485. What a contrast to the savage proclamations of Soult, Augereau, Bessières, and Napoleon, in similar circumstances!

* "The conduct of the people of Bidarray and Baigorri has given me the greatest pain: it has been different from that of all the other inhabitants of the country, and they have no right to act as they have done. If they wish to make war, let them join the ranks of the enemy; but I will not permit them to play the part alternately of peaceable inhabitants and soldiers. If they remain quietly at home, no one will molest them; they shall be, on the contrary, protected, like all the other inhabitants of this

bank; and this was no easy matter to accomplish in the face of a powerful flotilla of gunboats collected to obstruct the passage, and the efforts of an army of forty thousand men, sheltered by the guns of the place. Deeming his right sufficiently secured by this strong *point-d'appui*, Soult, during the course of January, drafted off the bulk of his forces to his left, in the mountains towards St Jean Pied-de-Port, and strengthened his position there by fieldworks. But he had no confidence in his ability to maintain his ground under the cannon of the fortress when the Upper Adour should be gained, as he foresaw it speedily would, by the enemy; and therefore he wrote to Napoleon, strongly counselling him to abandon all lesser objects, and concentrate his whole disposable forces from all quarters in a great army on the Seine, to prevent Paris from falling into the hands of the Allies. For this purpose, he proposed that Bayonne should be left to its own resources, with a garrison of fourteen thousand men; that Clausel, with two divisions, should be left in the Pyrenees to act on the rear of the invading force; and that the whole remainder of the army should march under his own command to Paris. Perhaps this was the only plan which, in the desperate state of the Emperor's fortunes, promised a chance of success. But, such as it was, it was disapproved of by him as contravening his favourite political system of giving nothing up; and he commanded Soult to maintain himself as long as he could, in any defensive position he could find, on the banks of the Adour.

42. Having completed his preparations, Wellington determined to force the passage of the Adour below Bayonne, and for this purpose he collected at the mouth of the river forty large sailing boats of thirty or forty tons burden each, professedly for the commissariat, but in truth laden with planks and other materials for the purpose of building a bridge between that point and the fortress. The better to conceal his real designs from the enemy, he determined at the same time to threaten the French left with Hill's corps, and

turn it by the sources of the rivers at the foot of the mountains, while Beresford, with the main body, menaced their centre. By this means, if his left, which was under the direction of Hope, succeeded in forcing the passage of the river, he hoped to cut Soult off entirely from Bordeaux, and drive him from under the cannon of Bayonne towards the Upper Garonne. A hard frost having at length rendered the deep clayey roads of Béarn practicable, the troops were all put in motion at daybreak on the 14th of February. Hill marched with twenty thousand men, directing one column against Harispe, who lay at Helleste with five thousand men, while another column moved towards the Joyeuse streamlet.

43. After a slight combat, the French general, wholly unable to resist such a superiority of force, fell back, and the fortress of St Jean Pied-de-Port was immediately invested by Mina's battalions. Meanwhile the allied centre, under Beresford, advanced against the French centre under Clausel, who, in obedience to his orders, fell back successively across the Joyeuse, the Bidouze, and the Gave de Mauléon, behind which he at length took up a position. At the same time, however, Jaca, commanding the pass from that quarter into Aragon, being left to its own resources by this retreat of the French left, capitulated. But Harispe having taken post in a strong position on the Garris mountain, in front of the Bidouze, Wellington, who had ridden up late in the evening to the spot, struck with the necessity of driving the enemy from such a post before Soult had time to reinforce the troops who occupied it from his centre, gave orders for its immediate attack. He observed to the 28th and 30th regiments, who headed the assaulting column, "You must take the hill before dark." With loud shouts, these gallant regiments rushed forward into the gloomy and woody ravine at its foot, and, clambering up the opposite side, carried the height almost immediately. The enemy, however, seeing they were unsupported, returned twice to the charge, striving to regain the

hill with the bayonet; but they were beat off with the loss of three hundred killed and wounded, and two hundred prisoners, while the British were only weakened by a hundred and sixty.

44. Soult upon this drew back his troops across the Bidouze river by the bridge of St Palais, which he destroyed. But Hill immediately repaired it; and on the 17th the French on the right were driven across the Gave de Mauléon, without having time to destroy the bridge of Arrivereta, in consequence of the 92d—ever foremost where glory was to be won—having discovered a ford above the bridge, and dislodged two battalions of French infantry posted to guard it. In the night of the 17th the French retired across the Gave d'Oleron, and took up a strong position near Sauveterre. Hill in consequence pushed forward his advanced posts, and was next morning on that river; but as the bridges were all broken down, it could not be passed till the pontoon train arrived, which occasioned, as the roads had become impassable from snow, a delay of several days. These decided movements on the right, however, had the desired effect of withdrawing Soult's attention from the Lower Adour, and inducing him to concentrate the bulk of his forces on the ridge of Sauveterre on his left, to defend the passage of the Gave d'Oleron. The time, therefore, having arrived for the attempt to force the passage of the Adour below Bayonne, Hope, on the night of the 22d, cautiously moved the first division, rocket-brigade, and six heavy guns, to the sandhills near the mouth of the river; and at daybreak on the following morning, although the stormy contrary winds and violent surf on the coast prevented the arrival of the gunboats and *chasse-martees*, which were intended to have co-operated in the passage, he gallantly resolved to attempt the forcing of the passage alone.

45. The French, however, were aware of what was going forward. No sooner were the scarlet uniforms seen emerging from the shelter of the sandhills, than their flotilla, which, from the British gunboats not having got

up, had the undisputed command of the river, opened a tremendous fire upon them. The British heavy guns and rocket-brigade, which on this occasion was for the first time introduced in the Peninsular War,* replied with so quick and sustained a discharge, that a sloop and three gunboats were speedily sunk; and the rest of the flotilla, in consternation at the awful aspect and rush of the rockets, drew off out of the reach of fire, further up the river. Upon this, sixty of the Guards were rowed across in a pontoon, in face of a French detachment, which was so terrified by the rockets whizzing through their ranks, that they also took to flight. A raft was then formed with the remainder of the pontoons, and a hawser having been stretched across, six hundred of the Guards and the 66th regiment, with part of the rocket-brigade, were passed over. They were immediately attacked by a French brigade under Macomble; but the assailants were struck with such consternation at the unwonted sight and sound of the rockets, that they too fled at the first discharge. The British continued to pass troops and artillery over the whole night; and by noon next day they were solidly established on the right bank, in such force as to render any attack hopeless.

46. To complete their security, the British flotilla, under Admiral Penrose, at this time appeared off the mouth of the river; and the boats of the men-of-war, with characteristic gallantry, instantly dashed into the raging surf to share the dangers of their comrades ashore. Captain O'Reilly, who led the whole, was thrown by the waves on the beach, with his whole boat's crew, and only saved by the soldiers picking them up when stretched senseless on the sand. The whole flotilla, when the tide rose, advanced in close order; but the long swell of the Bay of Biscay, impelled by a furious west wind, broke with such terrific violence on the shore, that several of the boats

* Rockets had been used, for the first time in war, by the British brigade at Leipzig, on October 18, 1813.—*Ande*, Chap. LXXXI. §60.

were swallowed up, with their gallant crews. Another and another came on, rowing bravely forward to what seemed certain destruction; and at length Lieutenant Cheyne of the Woodlark caught the right line, and safely passed the bar. Captain Elliot of the Martial, who came next, with his launch and crew, were wrecked and all lost, and three other vessels stranded and lost several of their men, notwithstanding the utmost efforts on the part of the troops to save them. At length, however, the greater part of the flotilla was safely anchored inside the bar. Next morning a bridge was constructed by the indefatigable efforts of Major Todd, who directed the officers and men of the Royal Engineers and Royal Staff corps. By their exertions the troops and artillery were safely passed over.* Finding himself thus supported, Hope, two days afterwards, commenced the investment of Bayonne, which after some sharp fighting, that cost the Allies five hundred killed and wounded, was effected chiefly by the admirable steadiness of the King's German Legion, upon whom the weight of the contest fell.

47. While the left wing of the army was thus establishing the investment of Bayonne, the centre and right, under the command of Wellington in person, were pursuing the career of victory on the Gave d'Oleron. The pontoons having arrived on the even-

* A curious circumstance occurred at the construction of this bridge, characteristic of the extraordinary intelligence and quickness which long campaigning had given to the British soldiers. Major Todd, who constructed the bridge, assured Colonel Napier, the Peninsular historian, that in the labours connected with it, though great part of the work was of a nautical kind, he found the soldiers, whose minds were quickened by extended experience, more ready of resource and of greater service than the seamen. It must be added, however, that the land forces employed in this operation were the Royal Engineers and Royal Staff corps, who had been sedulously instructed in the management of boats, mooring them in line, and crossing rivers, in the Medway. I am indebted for this information to my valued friend, Major-General Pasley, who has done so much to improve the instruction of the British army in the engineering department.—*NAPIER*, vi. 542.

ing of the 23d, preparations were immediately made for the passage of that river, behind which a formidable French force, thirty-five thousand strong, was now assembled at Sauveterre. Early on the 24th, Hill effected his passage at the head of three divisions at Villeneuve, while Clinton passed near Monfort with the sixth division. Soult, not deeming the position of Sauveterre tenable against the superior masses which by these movements threatened it in front, drew back his whole force, leaving Bayonne, garrisoned by six thousand men, to its own resources, and took post a little way further back at ORTHES, behind the Gave de Pau, and upon the last cluster of heights which presented a defensible position before the hills, shooting off to the northward from the Pyrenees, sank altogether into the plain of the Garonne. The army was here assembled on the summit of a ridge of a concave form facing the south-west, stretching from the neighbourhood of Orthes on the left, to the summit of the heights of St Boes, between it and Dax, on the right. D'Erlon, with the divisions of Foy and d'Armagnac, and the division Villatte in reserve, formed the centre; Reille, with the divisions Taupin and Maransin, having the brigade Paris in reserve, occupied St Boes and its neighbouring summits on the extreme right; while the divisions Daricau and Harispe stretched out on the left to the town of Orthes, guarding the noble bridge over the Gave de Pau at that place, the strength of which had defied all attempts, even by the able French engineers, for its destruction. The whole cavalry, with the exception of some small detachments, was collected in the low grounds in front of Orthes, where alone it could act with advantage, under the orders of General Pierre Soult. Thus the French marshal had now assembled in one battlefield eight divisions of infantry and one of cavalry, which, according to their former strength in the palmy days of the empire, would have presented at least sixty thousand combatants; but in the present wasted

condition of the Emperor's forces, they hardly mustered forty thousand sabres and bayonets, with forty guns.*

48. Wellington approached this formidable position in three columns. He had thirty-seven thousand men of all arms, of whom four thousand were horse, all Anglo-Portuguese and veteran troops, and forty-eight guns; the Spaniards being in the rear under Mina and Murillo, investing St Jean Pied-de-Port and Navarreins, and two divisions under Hope before Bayonne. Clinton and Hill, with the right wing and right centre, advanced by the great road from Sauveterre to Orthes; Sir Stapleton Cotton, with the cavalry, crossed the Gave de Pau by the fords of Caunelle and La Honton; Picton, with the left centre, was near Berenx; Beresford, with the left in the field, though forming the centre of the whole army, crossed the same river below its junction with the Gave d'Oleron at Peyrehorade, by means partly of fords and partly of pontoons, and moved along its right bank towards Orthes. This approach to an enterprising and powerful enemy, lying in a strong and concentrated position, in three columns, extending in a mountainous country over an extent of twenty miles, presented no ordinary dangers; but the admirable quality of the troops he commanded, as well as the enfeebled spirit of the French army, made the English general hazard it without fear.

49. He was in great anxiety, however, lest, against his army thus dispersed, an insurrectionary movement should spring up in the rear; and therefore, not content with reiterating his former orders against plundering or disorders of any kind, he issued a proclamation, authorising the people of the country, under their respective

mayors, to arm themselves for the preservation of order, and arrest all stragglers or marauders. Nor did his proclamation remain a dead letter; for on the night of the 25th, the inhabitants of a village on the high-road leading from Sauveterre, having shot one British soldier who had been plundering, and wounded another, he caused the wounded man to be hanged, and sent home an English colonel who had permitted his men to destroy the municipal archives of a small town on the line of march. "Maintain the strictest discipline; without that we are lost," said he to General Freyre. By these means tranquillity was preserved in his rear during this critical movement; and the English general now reaped the fruits of the admirable discipline and forbearance he had maintained in the enemy's country, by being enabled to bring up all his reserves, and hurl his undivided force upon the hostile army. Having collected his troops in front of the enemy on the evening of the 26th, he gave orders for an attack, on the following morning, upon the line along its whole extent, from the heights of St Boes to the bridge of Orthes.

50. At daybreak on the 27th, Beresford with the left wing, consisting of the fourth and seventh divisions, and Vivian's cavalry, commenced the action by turning the enemy's extreme right near St Boes, and gaining the road to Dax beyond it; while, at the same time, Picton—moving along the great road from Peyrehorade to Orthes, with the third, sixth, and light divisions under Clinton, the two last having been sent from the right by the ford of Berenx, supported by Cotton's and Somerset's cavalry—assaulted the enemy's centre. Hill, with the second British and Le Cor's Portuguese brigade, was to endeavour to force the passage at Orthes, and attack the enemy's left. There was an alarming interval of a mile and a half between Beresford's and Picton's men; but in it was a conical hill, nearly as high as the summit of Soult's position opposite, upon the top of which, on the moulder-

* See NAPIER, vi. 569, who quotes the numbers given above from Soult's official correspondence with the war-office at Paris. The French writers (VAUDONCOUERT, ii. 160; and *Pict. et Cong.* xxiii. 236) make the numbers which fought on their side 80,500 infantry and 2900 horse. But Soult's correspondence shows that this was independent of 7000 conscripts who took part in the action; and five thousand of them were good troops.

ing ramparts of an old Roman camp, Wellington with his staff took his station, having the whole scene of battle spread out like a map before him. Soon the fire of musketry was heard, and volumes of smoke were seen issuing from the ravines below, as Beresford's and Picton's columns, driving the enemy's pickets before them, wound their devious and intricate way through hollows, which a few men only could pass abreast, up towards the enemy's position. The moment was critical; and Picton, who was unsupported on either flank, felt for a time not a little anxious. They got through, however, without being seriously disquieted; and Wellington, who had eagerly watched their movements, as soon as they emerged into the open country, reinforced Picton by the sixth division, and drew the light division into the rear of the Roman camp, so as to form a connecting link between Beresford and Picton, and a reserve to either in case of need.

51. Beresford having gained and overlapped the extreme French right, commenced a vigorous attack in front and flank on the village of St Boes. The combat at this point was very violent. Reille's men, all tried veterans, stood firm: St Boes was strongly occupied, and the musketry rang loud and long on the summit of the ridge without any sensible ground being won by the assailants. At length, when he got all his troops up, the English general made so vehement an onset with Cole's division, that the village was carried, and the victors, pursuing the beaten columns of the enemy, began to move along the narrow elevated ridge, which extended from that point to the centre of their position. Here, however, all their efforts failed. The French troops, slowly retiring along the narrow neck of land, kept up an incessant rolling fire upon the pursuers; while Reille's batteries, skilfully disposed so as to rake on either flank the pursuing column, occasioned so dreadful a carnage that its advance was unavoidably checked. It was the counterpart of the terrific slaughter on the plateau of Craone.

The fourth division, however, long inured to victory, and accustomed to see almost insuperable obstacles yield to their enthusiastic valour, returned to the charge, and pressed on with stern resolution. The long train of killed and wounded which marked their advance proved the heroic valour with which they were animated. But a Portuguese brigade, torn in pieces by the terrible discharges of the cannon, every shot of which ploughed with fearful effect through their flank, at length gave way, and commenced a disorderly retreat along the narrow summit. The French, with loud shouts, and all the triumph of returning victory, pressed upon their rear; the fourth division, overwhelmed by the mass of fugitives which rushed into its ranks, reeled beneath the storm; and nothing but the subsequent timely charge of part of the light division on Reille's flank, prevented a serious disaster on that part of the line. At the same time, a detachment which Picton sent forward to endeavour to gain a footing on a tongue of land, jutting out from the lofty ridge on which the enemy's centre was posted, was repulsed with loss; and Soult, seeing his troops victorious at both extremities of his line that was engaged, smote his thigh in exultation, exclaiming, "At last I have him!"

52. But the eagle eye of Wellington was fixed on the decisive point. No sooner did he perceive, from the pause in the advance of the British along the ridge, and the continued and stationary fire which was going on, that a desperate conflict had taken place on the summit, than he made the requisite dispositions, by a vigorous front attack in the centre, to facilitate the progress of that part of the line. The third and sixth divisions were instantly ordered to advance with all possible expedition up the hill to attack the right of the centre; while Barnard's brigade of the light division was moved up to assail the left of their right wing, and interpose between it and the centre. The 52d, under Colonel Colborne,* led the way, and

* Now Lord Seaton.

quickly reached the marsh which separated the enemy's ridge from the hill on which Wellington stood. Soon that gallant corps crossed the swamp, with the water up to the soldiers' knees, and, mounting the hill unobserved, amidst the smoke and din on the summit, with a loud shout and crushing fire rushed forward into the opening between Taupin's and Foy's divisions, at the very moment that the former, following up their success against Beresford, were driving violently through St Boes, pushing the fourth division before them. At the same moment, Picton, at the head of his two divisions, mounted the ridge where the enemy's right centre was placed, and resolutely assailed Foy and d'Armagnac on their almost impregnable position. The effect of these simultaneous attacks, skilfully directed and gallantly executed, against two-thirds of the enemy's line, was decisive.

53. Foy and d'Armagnac, hard pressed themselves, were unable to send any succours to Reille's wing, which—thus cut off by Colborne's happy irruption, and assailed on one flank by his victorious troops, and on the other by Beresford's men, who, hearing the turmoil in the enemy's rear, returned with the discipline of veterans to the charge—fell into confusion, and were driven headlong down the hill, with the loss of part of their cannon. Cole's men now rushed with loud shouts along the narrow strait, strewn with so many of their dead, and joined with Barnard's brigade, so as completely to make themselves masters of that important part of the enemy's position. At the same time Foy was struck down, badly wounded, in the centre; and his division, falling into confusion, retreated down the hill on the opposite side, and of necessity drew after it Taupin's and Maransin's. Wellington immediately pushed forward the seventh division, hitherto held in reserve, and two batteries of artillery, which ascended to the narrow ridge, now occupied by the fourth division and Barnard's brigade. At the same time Picton, with the third and sixth divisions, reached the sum-

mit of the ridge in the middle, driving d'Armagnac before them down the other side; and his guns, established on a commanding knoll in the centre, thundered with dreadful effect from the height, and sent a storm of balls through the enemy's masses from one end of his position to the other.

54. The victory was now secure; and it was rendered more decisive by the simultaneous success of Hill on the extreme right, who had forced the passage of the Gave by the ford of Souars near Orthes, seized the heights above, won the great road from thence to Pau, and thus not only cut off his best and only direct line of retreat, but prevented Harispe, on the extreme French left, from sending any succours to the hard-pressed right and centre. Soult, seeing this, ordered a general retreat; and the wild heathy hills which stretched out in the rear both afforded abundant room for his retiring columns, and presented several strong positions, of which he skilfully availed himself, for retarding the advance of the pursuing army. With admirable discipline, the French, having regained their order at the foot of the ridge on which they had been posted during the battle, retired in the finest array, the rear-guard constantly facing about and obstinately resisting, whenever the intervention of a ridge afforded a favourable opportunity for making a stand. But the rugged and desolate hills, as they retired, gradually melted into the plain; and five miles from the field of battle they required to cross the stream of the Luy de Béarn, only to be reached by a single road, and traversed by a single arch at the bridge of Sault de Navailles. The English infantry was pressing on in close pursuit, with a deafening roll of musketry and cannon; Hill, on their left, was rapidly making for the only bridge in their rear; and Sir Stapleton Cotton and Lord Edward Somerset's dragoons, closely following in the low grounds on their flank, were preparing to charge the moment they descended into the plain.

55. In these circumstances, although Paris with his division at first with heroic constancy sustained the onset of

the pursuers, and gained time for the army to retire, yet after some miles were passed the soldiers became sensible of their danger, and, first quickening their pace as they saw Hill moving parallel and threatening to anticipate them at the bridge, at length began to run violently. Hill's men set off at full speed also, each party striving which should first reach the bridge; and although the French gained the race, and so secured the passage of their army, yet great part of their troops fell into irretrievable confusion in the disorderly rush, and the fields were covered with scattered bands. Cotton charged, on the only occasion which presented itself, at the head of Somerset's dragoons and the 7th hussars, three battalions of the enemy, which he broke, and made three hundred prisoners; but although two thousand more threw down their arms in an enclosed field, the greater part contrived to escape across the river, which was not far distant. At length the scattered bands, after wading the stream, reassembled on the opposite bank, with that readiness for which the French troops have ever been distinguished; and the wearied British soldiers formed their bivouacs on its southern shore.

56. Though the battle of Orthes was not graced by the same military trophies taken on the field as those of Salamanca or Vittoria, it was inferior to none of Wellington's great victories in the moral consequences with which it was attended. The enemy lost three thousand nine hundred killed, wounded, and prisoners, on the field, and six guns—the Allies two thousand three hundred. But the moral effects of the victory were much greater than its material results. The discouragement and demoralisation introduced into the French army by its consequences were extreme. The conscripts, in great part ill affected, and all desponding in the cause, threw away their arms and deserted by hundreds; disorganisation and confusion prevailed in their retreat, inasmuch that, a month afterwards, the stragglers and missing were found, by an official statement, to be still

three thousand. Thus Soult was weakened by this victory, and its effects, to the extent of fully seven thousand men—a grievous and irreparable loss, when he was already painfully contending against superior numbers and growing despondency. But its ultimate effects upon the south of France were still more important, and, in the critical state of the Emperor's fortunes, proved decisive. By the line of Soult's retreat, which was in the direction of Toulouse, the great road to BORDEAUX was left open. Bayonne and St Jean Pied-de-Port were already closely invested; no force capable either of withstanding the invaders or of controlling public opinion, existed from the Pyrenees to the Garonne; and the Royalists in the southern provinces, relieved from the fetters which for twenty years had restrained them, were left at liberty to give expression to their inclination, which soon found vent in a general revolt.

57. Soult, after refreshing his army with a few hours' sleep at Sault de Navailles, on the right bank of the Luy de Béarn, continued his retreat towards Agen, by St Sever on the Adour, breaking down all the bridges over the numerous mountain torrents which he crossed, as soon as he had passed them. Their great number sensibly retarded the pursuit of the victors, although Wellington, regardless of a slight wound he had received on the preceding day, was on horseback at daylight on the 28th, and continued to follow the enemy with the utmost vigour. The French marshal retired towards Tarbes by both banks of the Adour; a bold, but yet judicious movement, which, albeit abandoning Bordeaux to the enemy, yet secured for his beaten and dejected army, on one flank at least, the support of the mountains, and preserved for him, in case of need, a secure junction with the forces of Suchet from Catalonia. There was not the slightest reason to fear that Wellington would advance far into the interior of France, while such a force remained on his flank to menace his rear and communications: Frederick the Great saved his own states from in-

vasion after the raising of the siege of Olmütz, by marching into Bohemia. The British army, accordingly, instead of moving in a body upon Bordeaux, wisely followed the retiring footsteps of their antagonists; and after taking possession of the magazines at Mont Marsan, which were abandoned by the enemy, and crossing over the bulk of his forces to the right bank of the Adour by the bridge of St Sever, which he repaired, Wellington detached Hill to the left bank to make himself master of the great magazines at Aire. Villatte's and Harispe's divisions were drawn up on a strong ridge in front of that town, and made so vigorous a resistance to the attack, that the Portuguese were driven back, and the action was well-nigh lost. But Stewart, with the British left, having meanwhile won the heights on the French right, immediately detached Barnes, with the 50th and 92d, to the aid of the Portuguese. Their vigorous charge soon altered the state of affairs; the French reeled in their turn; Byng's brigade gradually came up, and ultimately, after a severe combat, in which great bravery was displayed on both sides, the enemy were driven entirely out of Aire, the whole magazines in which fell into the hands of the British.

58. The pursuit was not continued at this time further in this direction, for great events had occurred in another; and an opportunity presented itself for striking a decisive blow against the power of Napoleon in the third city of the empire, which was not neglected by the English general. Bordeaux, which through the whole Revolution had been distinguished by its moderate or Royalist feelings, had been in the greatest state of excitement since the advance of the English army into the south of France promised to relieve its inhabitants, at no distant period, from the iron yoke of the Revolution. These feelings rose to a perfect climax when the battle of Orthes opened the road to Bordeaux to the victorious British arms, and constrained Soult to an eccentric retreat in the direction of Toulouse. The Royalist committee, which since March 1813 had

secretly existed in that city, and which comprised a large portion of the most respectable and influential citizens, were indefatigable in their endeavours to take advantage of this favourable state of things, and bring about a public declaration from the inhabitants in favour of the Bourbon dynasty. Cautiously they revealed their designs to M. Lynch, the mayor of the city, who instantly and warmly entered into their views, and declared his earnest desire to be the first to proclaim Louis XVIII. By their united efforts matters were so far arranged that, immediately after the battle of Orthes, the Marquis de Larochejaquelein was despatched to Wellington's headquarters, to request the assistance of three thousand men in support of their cause. Wisely judging that a small British force was not to be lightly hazarded on so momentous and distant an enterprise, and appreciating the importance of the movement which was now ready to take place, Wellington, instead of three thousand, sent them twelve thousand men, under the command of Lord Beresford. But as he was aware that the allied powers were still negotiating with Napoleon at Châtillon, and that peace might be any day concluded, he was careful to inform the deputation of the chances of such an event occurring, distinctly warning them at the same time, that in the event of a declaration in favour of Louis XVIII. taking place, and peace following with Napoleon, it would be beyond his power to afford them any protection. Beresford's instructions were, to take no part in any political movement which might occur, and neither to support nor repress it; to say the British wished well to Louis XVIII., but were negotiating with Napoleon; and, if a revolt occurred, to supply the people with arms and ammunition from the magazines at Dax.

59. Beresford, with the fourth and seventh divisions, set out from the main army on the 8th, and after crossing the wild and heathy *landes* without opposition, arrived on the 12th before Bordeaux. He had been preceded, two days before by the Marquis de La-

rochejaquelein, who had announced the speedy arrival of the English divisions, and urged the Royalist committee to declare at once in favour of the descendant of Henry IV. Great hesitation, as is usual in such a decisive moment, prevailed among the leaders; and many were anxious to recede from their professions, now that the time for action had arrived. But equal apprehensions were felt by the imperial military authorities, who, unable to make head against the coming storm, secretly withdrew, one by one, to the opposite side of the Garonne, leaving the slender garrison without any leaders. Part of the troops in this emergency followed the example, and crossed over to the other side, after burning a few ships of war on the stocks; and a battalion of conscripts which remained, voluntarily laid down their arms. At half-past twelve, the English standards approached the town, long the capital of the Plantagenet sovereigns in France, and the favourite residence of the Black Prince, but where they had not been seen for nearly five hundred years. The mayor and civic authorities, in the costume of their respective offices, came out to meet them at a short distance from the suburbs, dressed in their imperial garb, but with white cockades secretly in their pockets; and the former delivered an address, in which he professed the joy which the people felt at being delivered from their slavery, and at the arrival of their liberators. His speech was frequently interrupted with cries of "A bas les Aigles!" — "Vivent les Bourbons!" and at its close he took off his tricolor scarf, as well as the badge of the Legion of Honour, and mounted the white cockade. All his attendants immediately did the same; enthusiastic cheers rent the sky; and the British troops, surrounded by an ever-increasing multitude of the people, entered the ancient capital of their Plantagenet sovereigns, hailed as deliverers and friends, to re-establish the throne of the royal race with whom they had for so many centuries been engaged in almost ceaseless hostility. Thus had England, first of all the allied powers,

the glory of obtaining an open declaration from a great city in France in favour of their ancient but exiled monarch — twenty years and one month after the contest had begun, from the murder of the best and most blameless of his line.

60. The Duke d'Angoulême soon after arrived, and was received with unbounded enthusiasm; 'a prodigious crowd assembled to greet his entrance. White handkerchiefs waved from every window; the white flag was to be seen on every steeple; all classes felicitated each other on the change; the day was passed as a brilliant fête; and a revolution, the most important in its consequences which had occurred in Europe since the breaking out of the bloody drama of 1789, passed over without one tear falling in sorrow, or one drop of blood being shed. But amidst all these transports, arising rather from the prospect of cessation to immediate and pressing evils, than from any distinct hopes or anticipations for the future, there were not wanting many far-seeing men, even amongst those unconnected with the imperial government, who, without denying the intolerable evils to which it had given rise, felt profoundly mortified at this fresh proof of the instability of their countrymen, and who anticipated little eventual benefit to France from a restoration which was ushered in by the victorious bayonets of foreign powers. Meanwhile, however, the Duke d'Angoulême and Beresford remained in peaceable possession of Bordeaux; the threatening incursions of the imperial troops on the other side of the river were repressed by three thousand British soldiers who crossed over; and although Wellington was at first not a little annoyed by a proclamation issued by the mayor of Bordeaux, in which he declared that "the English, Spaniards, and Portuguese were united in the south,"* as the allied sovereigns were in the north, to destroy the scourge of nations, and replace him by a monarch, the father of

* "It is not to subject our country to the yoke of strangers that the English, Spaniards, and Portuguese have approached our walls. They have united in the south, as the other people have in the north, to destroy the

his people," yet events succeeded each other with such rapidity, that this source of disquietude was soon removed, and the words of M. Lynch seemed to have been prophetic of the approaching fall of Napoleon.

61. Soult and Wellington during this period remained in a state of inactivity, each supposing that the other was stronger than himself; for the detachment of twelve thousand men to Bayonne, and of as many to Bordeaux, besides those employed in the blockade of St Jean Pied-de-Port and Navarreins, had now reduced the opposite armies as nearly as possible to an equality. The forces at the command of the French general were reduced, by the desertion and disorganisation consequent on the battle of Orthes, to twenty-eight thousand sabres and bayonets, with thirty-eight guns. On the side of the English, only twenty-seven thousand combatants were in line, with forty-two guns, in consequence of the large detachments made. But the quality and spirit of the troops were decidedly superior to those of the French army. The astounding intelligence of the defection of Bordeaux, however, and proclamation of Louis XVIII. there, made Soult sensible that some great effort was necessary to counteract the growing disaffection of the southern provinces, and prevent his army from melting away, as it had recently done, from the despondency and discontent of the newly-embodied

conscripts. This was the more necessary, as the admirable discipline and prompt payment for supplies of all sorts which prevailed in the British camp, contrasted so fearfully with the forced requisitions to which he was obliged to have recourse from the capture of all his magazines, and the general licence in which his troops indulged after the retreat from Orthes. Indeed, at this time, he wrote to the minister of war at Paris, that "he wanted officers who knew how to respect property; and that the people seemed more disposed to favour the invaders than to second the French army." Influenced by these considerations, the French marshal no sooner learned the events at Bordeaux, and the proclamation of the Duke d'Angoulême, than he issued a counter address, couched in energetic language, and strains of no measured invective against the English policy and government. While a calm retrospect of the past has now demonstrated, even to the French themselves, that great part of his reproaches were unfounded, and may make us smile at the vehemence of some of his expressions; yet candour must recollect the critical and unparalleled circumstances in which Soult was placed when this proclamation was issued, and do justice to the firmness which, amidst the general wreck of the imperial fortunes, remained unshaken, and the fidelity which, surrounded by defection, nailed its colours to the mast.*

scourge of nations, and replace him by a monarch, the father of his people; it is by him alone that we can appease the wrath of a neighbouring nation, whom we have oppressed with the most perfidious despotism. The Bourbons are unstained by French blood; with the testament of Louis XVI. in their hand, they forget all resentment: everywhere they proclaim and prove that tolerance is the first principle by which they are actuated. It is in deploring the terrible ravages of the tyranny which licence induced, that they forgot errors caused by the illusions of liberty. The short and consoling expressions addressed to you by the husband of the daughter of Louis XVI., 'No more tyrants; no more war; no more conscription; no vexatious imposts,' have already proved a balm to every heart. Possibly it is reserved for the great captain, who has already merited the glorious title of the *liberator of nations*, to give his name to the glorious epoch of such

a happy prodigy."—*Proclamation*, 12th March 1814, by M. LYNCH, *Mayor of Bordeaux*; *BEAUCHAMPE*, ii. 101, 102.

* "Soldiers! at the battle of Orthes you did your duty; the enemy's losses surpassed yours, and his blood moistened the ground he gained. He has had the indecency since to provoke you and your countrymen to revolt and sedition. He speaks of peace, but firebrands of sedition follow him. Thanks to him for making known his intentions; our forces are thereby multiplied a hundred-fold: he has rallied round our standards all those who, deceived by appearances, believed our enemies would make an honourable war. No peace with that disloyal and perfidious nation! no peace with the English and their auxiliaries, until they quit the French territory! They have dared to insult the national honour; they have had the infamy to incite Frenchmen to become perjured towards the Emperor. Wash out the offence in blood.

62. This proclamation produced a considerable impression, at least upon the old soldiers in his army; and Soult, anxious to take advantage of the excitement, and of the absence of so large a portion of the English troops at Bordeaux, determined to resume offensive operations. Accordingly, on the 12th March, he put his troops in motion; and as Wellington's main body was concentrated round Aire and Barcelone, yet divided in two by the Adour, he concentrated his forces on the side of Maubourguet in the direction of the high tableland between Pau and Aire, designing to strike a blow at the English divisions on the left bank of that river. On the 7th he had made an attempt on Pau, intending to arrest the nobles who had assembled to welcome the Duke d'Angoulême; but he was stopped by Fane, who anticipated him, and the attempt failed. Some lesser skirmishes of cavalry took place in front of Aire, in which the Portuguese horse sustained a trifling loss. But Wellington, as soon as he heard of this incursion, brought over the third and sixth divisions across the Adour to support Hill, and at the same time gave orders to Freyre's Galicians and Giron's Andalusians to issue from the valley of the Bastan, where they had been hitherto kept to prevent plundering, and come up to his support.

To arms! Let this cry resound through the south of France; the Frenchman that now hesitates abjures his country, and belongs to its enemies. Yet a few days, and those who believe in English honour and sincerity will learn to their cost that cunning promises are made to abate their preparations, and subjugate them. They will learn to their cost that if the English pay and are generous to-day, to-morrow they will retake, and with interest, in contributions, what they disburse. Let the pusillanimous beings who calculate the cost of saving their country recollect, that the English have in view to reduce the French to the same servitude as the Spaniards, Portuguese, and Sicilians. History shows the English at the head of all conspiracies, all odious plots and assassinations; aiming to overthrow all principles, to destroy all great commercial establishments, to satisfy their insatiable cupidity. Does there exist, upon the face of the globe, a point known to the English, where they have not destroyed, by seditions and violence, all manufactures which could rival their own?

By this means he collected thirty-six thousand men, including the troops on the other side of the Adour, to withstand the irruption; and Soult, fearing to attack such a force, and hearing of the fall of Bordeaux, determined to retire. He sent forward, accordingly, his conscripts at once to TOULOUSE, being resolved to try once more the fortune of arms in the strong position which was presented in the environs of that city, and commenced a rapid retreat. The British army as swiftly followed in pursuit, on both banks of the Adour, but the great bulk of their force was always on the left bank. A sharp combat took place at Vic-Bigorre on the 19th, when d'Armagnac and Paris were only compelled at length to fall back, after each side had sustained a loss of two hundred and fifty men. Unhappily that on the side of the British included the able and accomplished Colonel Sturgeon of the Engineers, whose efforts and genius had been so signally evinced through the whole course of the Peninsular War.

63. A more serious action took place when the army approached Tarbes. The light division and hussars were still on the right bank of the Adour, and they had been reinforced by Clinton's division (the sixth) and Freyre's Spaniards; but when they approached that town, which stands on the upper

Thus will they do to the French if they prevail. Be obedient, and yield to discipline, and reserve your implacable hatred for the traitors and enemies to the French peace. War to the death against those who would divide in order to destroy us, and to those cowards who desert the imperial eagles to range themselves under another banner!"—GURWOOD, xi. 594; NAPIER, vi. 587, 589. This proclamation is one of the most curious and instructive monuments of the Revolution. The magnanimous policy of Wellington, which, aiming at moving the moral affections, coerced so effectually the disorders of his troops; the generous forbearance of England, which, an enemy only to the Revolution and its spoliations, proposed to leave France untouched, could not be conceived by the French general. He thought it was the homage which vice in hypocrisy pays to virtue. It is interesting to contrast this furious tirade with Soult's unbounded praises of England at the London dinner, on occasion of the coronation of Queen Victoria in 1839; yet both were probably sincere at the time.

part of that stream, a simultaneous movement was made by Hill with the right wing, and Clinton on the left, to envelope and cut off Harispe's and Villatte's divisions, which formed the French rear-guard in occupation of it. The combat began at twelve o'clock, by a violent fire from Hill's artillery on the right, which was immediately re-echoed in still louder tones by Clinton's on the left; while Alten, with the light division, assailed the centre. The French fought stoutly, and, mistaking the British rifle battalions, from their dark uniform, for Portuguese, let them come up to the very muzzles of their guns. But the Rifles were hardy veterans, inured to victory; and at length Harispe's men, unable to stand their deadly point-blank fire, broke and fled. If Clinton's troops on the left had been up at this moment, the French would have been totally destroyed; for Hill had at the same moment driven back Villatte on the right, and the plain beyond Tarbes was covered with a confused mass of fugitives, closely followed by the shouting and victorious British.

64. But Clinton's soldiers, notwithstanding the utmost efforts, had not been able to get up; the numerous ditches and hedges which intersected the plain rendered all pursuit by the cavalry impossible; and thus the French, though utterly broken, succeeded, with very little loss, in reaching a ridge three miles distant, where Clausel, who with four divisions was drawn up to receive them, immediately opened a heavy fire from all his batteries upon the Allies. This at once checked the pursuit; and in the night Soult retired in two columns, one on the high-road, the other on the right, guided by watchfires on the hills. Such was the rapidity of his retreat—as he was now making by rapid strides for Toulouse, where his great depots were placed, and on which all his future combinations were based—that he reached that town in four days, though ninety miles distant, and arranged his army in position before it on the 25th. Wellington, encumbered with a great artillery and pontoon train, and obliged

to keep his men well in hand, from the uncertainty when Suchet's great reinforcement from Catalonia, which was known to be approaching, might join the enemy, did not arrive on the Toulouze, facing the French in front of Toulouse, till the 27th.

65. Thus, within six weeks after the campaign opened, Wellington had driven the French from the neighbourhood of Bayonne to Toulouse, a distance of two hundred miles; had conquered the whole country between the Pyrenees and the Garonne; had passed six large and several smaller rivers; driven the enemy's forces from two fortified *places-de-pont*, and many minor field-works; defeated them in one pitched battle, besides lesser combats; crossed the raging flood of the Adour in the face of the garrison of Bayonne, below that fortress, and laid siege to it as well as to St Jean Pied-de-Port and Navarreins; and finally brought about a revolution at Bordeaux, and a declaration in favour of the Bourbon dynasty from the third city in the empire. These great successes, too, had been gained by an army composed of so many and such discordant nations, that the French themselves were astonished how it was held together; nearly a third of which, from the fierce passions with which it was animated, and the marauding habits which it had acquired, had not yet been brought across the frontier; which, though considerably superior when the campaign commenced, was so wasted down by the necessity of investing so many fortresses, and occupying such an extensive tract of country, that the active force in the field was from the very first little, if at all, superior to that of the enemy; and against an army in great part composed of the iron Peninsular veterans, the best troops now in the French service, and a general second only to Napoleon in the vigour and ability with which he maintained a defensive warfare.

66. It must be confessed that there are few periods in the military annals of the British empire fraught with brighter glory to its army or its chief. The brows of Wellington and his fol-

lowers, loaded with military laurels, are yet encircled with a purer wreath, when it is recollected that these advantages had been gained without the slightest deviation from the strict principles of justice on which they had throughout maintained the contest; that no wasting contributions, scarcely any individual plunder, had disgraced their footsteps; that to avoid the pillage of their own troops, the requisitions of their own generals, the peasants of France sought refuge within the sanctuary of the British lines; and that this admirable discipline was enforced by the commander, and obeyed by his soldiers, when heading a vast military array of the Peninsular forces, hastily levied, imperfectly disciplined, burning with resentment for the six years' wasting and desolation of their own country, and whose services it was frequently necessary to forego, to avoid the retaliation which they so naturally endeavoured to inflict on their oppressors.

67. While these decisive blows were paralysing the imperial strength in the south of France, the progress of events in Catalonia, though of far inferior importance, was also tending to the same general result. Since the junction of the armies of Catalonia and Aragon, and the retreat of the allied force under Lord William Bentinck to Tarragona, in September 1813, already noticed, the opposite hosts had remained in a state of total inactivity. Clinton, who had succeeded Lord William in the command, with the British and German division from Sicily, ten thousand strong, with nine thousand of Sarsfield's Spaniards, lay on the right bank of the Llobregat, from its mouth to the mountains; Elio, with sixteen thousand ill-disciplined Spanish troops, observed Gerona from Vecqui; while Copons' men, about twelve thousand more, besieged Peniscola, and blockaded Lerida, Mequinenza, and the lesser forts still occupied by the enemy in the rear. On the other hand, Suchet had still sixty-five thousand admirable troops, the best in Spain, under his command, and without drawing a man from the for-

tresses, he could bring thirty thousand sabres and bayonets into the field. Offensive operations upon an extended scale, with ten thousand British troops, and such a disjointed rabble of Spaniards, without discipline or magazines, and generally starving, under generals acting almost independently of each other, were of course out of the question; and the English general found that, even for lesser enterprises which offered a fair prospect of success, no reliance whatever could be placed on their co-operation.

68. From a failure on Copons' part to take the share assigned him, a well-conceived attack of Clinton, with six thousand men, on the French posts at Molinos del Rey, failed of obtaining complete success. At this very time, however, Napoleon, alarmed by the formidable invasion of the Allies, recalled ten thousand soldiers and eighty guns from the army of Catalonia: upon which Suchet increased the garrison of Barcelona to eight thousand men; prepared to retire himself to the line of the Fluvia, near the foot of the Pyrenees; sent secret instructions to the garrisons in his rear to make their escape the best way they could, and join him near Figueras; and strongly recommended to Napoleon, to send Ferdinand VII., under the treaty of Valençay, as speedily as possible into Catalonia, in order to give him a decent pretext for evacuating all the fortresses, except Figueras, in that province, and thereby enable him to march with twenty-five thousand additional veterans to the succour of the Emperor.

69. The return of part of these garrisons, however, was accelerated by a fraudulent stratagem, unworthy of military honour, by which the Spaniards now recovered some of the fortresses, in much the same way as the French had, six years before, got possession of them. There was, at this time, in the French service, a Spaniard of Flemish descent, Van Halen, who, during his employment on the staff of Suchet, had contrived to make himself master, not only of the power of exactly imitating his writing, but of his private seal and the cipher which

he made use of in his most confidential despatches. He had even dived so deep into his mysteries, as to have discovered the private mark by which Suchet had desired all his chief officers to distinguish his genuine from forged despatches, viz. the inserting a slender light-coloured hair in the ciphered paper. Having possessed himself of this secret information, he entered into communication with the Baron d'Erolles, and they drew up orders addressed, in Suchet's name, to the governors of all the towns held by the French in the rear of the allied army, directing them to evacuate the fortresses and march towards him, with a view to joining the Emperor in the heart of France.

70. History has little interest in recording the means by which fraud and artifice overreach valour and sincerity. Suffice it to say, that the orders fabricated by Van Halen were so precise and articulate, the forgeries so well executed, and the preventions taken against discovery so complete, that they deceived the governors of Lerida, Mequinenza, and Monzon, which thus fell into the hands of the Spaniards. Clinton at first refused to have anything to do with the matter, but finally agreed to intercept the garrisons when they had left the fortresses. The French, pressed by the Spaniards under Copons in rear, and finding their advance barred by Clinton in front, were compelled, to the number of 2600 men, with four guns and a military chest, to lay down their arms. But the stratagem failed at Tortosa, in consequence of the Spanish general Sans, to whom the French governor Robert, feigning to fall into the snare, had written to come with two battalions to take possession of the place, not having had courage to do so. But having received orders from Napoleon to send off a second draft of ten thousand men to Lyons, Suchet surrendered Gerona to the Spaniards, and drew back all his troops in the field to the neighbourhood of Figueras, there to await the issue of the crisis which was approaching.

71. Meanwhile Barcelona continued closely blockaded; and a sally which

Habert made on the 23d February was repulsed with great loss by Sarafield, who commanded the blockading force. The place continued closely invested till the 20th March, when Ferdinand VII. arrived on the frontier from Perpignan, accompanied by his brother Don Carlos, and Don Antonio his uncle. He was received on the banks of the Fluvia with great pomp, and in presence of both the French and Spanish armies, who made a convention for a suspension of arms on this interesting occasion. Indeed, hostilities everywhere ceased in Catalonia; both parties with reason regarding the war as terminated by the treaty of Valençay. Ferdinand continued his journey in perfect tranquillity towards Madrid, all honours being rendered to him equally by the French as by the Spanish garrisons; and Clinton, in obedience to orders received from Wellington, broke up his army; part being embarked at Tarragona to join Lord William Bentinck, who was engaged in operations against Genoa, and part marching across Aragon, to join Wellington on the Garonne.

72. The treaty of Valençay, however, not having been ratified by the Cortes, the blockade of the fortresses still held by the French continued; and so late as the 18th April, long after peace had been concluded at Paris, Habert, in ignorance of that event, made a vigorous effort to cut his way out of Barcelona; and though repulsed and driven in again, the encounter was very bloody, and cost the Spaniards eight hundred men. Intelligence of the pacification at Paris arrived four days afterwards, and terminated the contest in that quarter; and then appeared, in the clearest colours, both the strength of the hold which the Emperor had taken of Spain, and the disastrous effect of the grasping system which made him, even in the last extremity, persist in retaining what he had once acquired. When the French soldiers in Spain hoisted the white flag, the symbol of universal peace, they still held, by the positive order of Napoleon, Barcelona, Figueras, Tortosa, Morilla, Peniscola, Saguntum, and

Denia; and in these fortresses were shut up no less than twenty-two thousand veteran soldiers, which, with the like force under Suchet's immediate command on the Fluvia, would have given Napoleon, when the scales hung all but even on the banks of the Seine, a decisive superiority over all the forces of the allied sovereigns.*

73. The war terminated somewhat sooner on the western coast of Spain. The only stronghold still held by the French there, after the storming of San Sebastian, was Santona, which, situated on the rocky extremity of a long sandy promontory on the coast of Biscay, had long been an object of violent contest between the contending parties; and still, in the vicinity of a re-instated monarchy, hoisted the tricolor flag. After the battle of Vittoria it was invested by the Galicians by land, and by the British cruisers by sea; but the latter blockade was maintained so negligently, and the Spanish land troops were so inefficient, that Wellington at first gave orders to Lord Aylmer's brigade to proceed thither. Though this intention was not carried into effect, yet Captain Wells, with some British sappers and miners, was sent to accelerate their operations. As usual, however, the Spaniards were so dilatory and ill-prepared, that nothing effectual was done till the middle of February, when the Fort of Puertal, outside the place, was carried. On the night of the 21st, the outworks were stormed; and the direction of the approaches being now intrusted to Captain Wells, he pushed his operations so vigorously that the Fort Laredo, which commanded the harbour, was taken. Lameth, the French governor, upon this offered to capitulate in April, on condition of being sent back to France. Wellington refused to agree to these terms; but hardly had his

* "Undoubtedly it is deplorable that twenty-two thousand excellent troops, who might have been of great service, have been thus uselessly scattered in a dozen places; but Suchet acted thus in virtue of positive orders, and no one has thought of blaming him for it. All opportunities of withdrawing these garrisons were missed. The orders were either given or forwarded too late."—SUCHET, *Mémoires*, ii. 371; BIGNON, xiii. 144.

declinature arrived, when intelligence was received of the pacification at Paris, which closed hostilities, and the place, with the tricolor flag still waving on it, was in terms of the treaty given over to the Spaniards.

74. To conclude the narrative of the Peninsular War, it only remains to notice the last and bloody struggles on the Garonne and Adour, which, though not occurring in chronological order till after the capitulation of Paris, shall be here detailed, in order not to break the account of the decisive events which led to that catastrophe. TOULOUSE, in which the French army under Soult was now concentrated, and before which the British army lay, on the left bank of the Garonne, fronting the Touch, was well known to Marshal Soult, as he had been born and bred in its vicinity; and he had long fixed upon it as the post where his final stand for the south of France was to be made. That ancient capital of the southern provinces of the monarchy, so celebrated in poetry and romance, though much fallen from its former greatness, still numbered fifty thousand inhabitants within its walls; and being situated on both banks of the Garonne, of which it commanded the principal passage, and the centre of all the roads in that part of the country, it was a strategical point of the very highest importance, both with a view to obtaining facilities for his own, and keeping them from the enemy's army. Posted there, the French general was master of a line of retreat either toward Suchet by Carcassonne, or toward Augereau by Alby; while the ample stream of the Garonne wafted supplies of all sorts to his army, and the walls of the city itself afforded a protection of no ordinary importance to his soldiers.

75. That river, flowing on the west of the city, properly so called, presented to the Allies a deep curve, at the bottom of which the town is placed, connected, by a massy stone bridge of ancient architecture, with the suburb of St Ciprien, situated on its left bank. This suburb, which first presented itself to the attack of an enemy coming

from the side of Bayonne, was defended by an old brick wall, flanked by massy towers; and beyond this rampart Soult had erected outer fieldworks. The city itself, on the other bank, was also surrounded by a thick brick wall, strengthened with towers of such dimensions as to bear four-and-twenty pounders. The great canal of Languedoc, which unites the Garonne to the Mediterranean sea, wound round the town to the east and north, and joined the river a few miles below it: forming in this manner, with the Garonne itself, a vast wet ditch, which, on every side except a small opening to the south-east, encircled its walls at the distance of three-quarters of a mile. The suburbs of St Etienne and Guillemerin, which stretched out across the canal to the eastward from the walls, were strengthened with fieldworks at the points wherethey crossed the canal; and beyond them, on the other side of the canal, rose the steep ridge of Mont Rave, the outer face of which, whereby alone it could be assailed by the enemy, being exceedingly rugged and difficult of access.

76. From this description of Soult's position, it was clear that an attack on the town from the west, and through the suburb of St Ciprien, was out of the question. The suburb itself, flanked on either side by a deep and impassable river, defended by a wall and external redoubt, could not be forced but at an enormous loss; and even if taken, the town was only to be reached from that quarter by a long bridge, easily susceptible of defence. The passage above the town presented difficulties apparently formidable; for it would bring the Allies into the deep and heavy country around the Arrege, the cross-roads of which, from the recent rains, had become all but impassable. But nevertheless Wellington resolved to attempt it, because, if successful, such a movement would detach Soult from the succours he expected from Suchet, throw back the latter general into the Pyrenees, by enabling the British to cut off his retreat by Narbonne, open up the communication with Bubna at Lyons, and compel

Soult to abandon the line of the Garonne. He commenced the formation of a bridge at Poitet, six miles below Toulouse, which appeared the most advantageous site that could be selected; but the stream was found to be too broad for the pontoons, and no means of obviating the defect existed.

77. This delayed the passage for some days: at length Hill discovered a more favourable point near Pensaguel, about seven miles below Toulouse, where a bridge was speedily laid down; and he immediately crossed over with two British divisions and Murillo's Spaniards, in all thirteen thousand men, with eighteen guns. This detachment was to seize the bridge of Untegabelle over the Arrege, and advance towards Toulouse by its right bank, while Wellington with the main body threatened the faubourg St Ciprien on the left bank of the Garonne; and Soult, not knowing on which side he at first was to be assailed, kept the bulk of his forces in hand within the walls of the town, only observing Hill with light troops. But the roads on either side of the Arrege were found to be altogether impassable; and as everything depended on rapidity of movement, Hill wisely renounced the project of an attack on that side; recrossed the Garonne on the night of the 1st April, took up his pontoon bridge, and returned to the headquarters on the left bank of the river.

78. Wellington now determined to make the attempt still further below the town; but this change in the line of attack, though unavoidable in the circumstances, proved of the most essential service to the French general. For, seeing that the passage would be made on that side, he set his whole army, and all the male population of Toulouse, to work at fortifications on the Mont Rave, by which alone the town could be approached in that quarter; and with such diligence did they labour during the nine days' respite afforded them before the allied army could finally effect their passage, that a most formidable series of fieldworks was erected on the summit of that rugged ridge, as well as at all the bridges over

the canal and entrances of the suburbs of the town. Though, however, every hour was precious, yet such was the flooded state of the Garonne, from the torrents of rain which fell, and the melting of the snows in the Pyrenees, that the English general was compelled, much against his will, to remain inactive in front of St Ciprien till the evening of the 3d. Then, as the river had somewhat fallen, the pontoons were carried in the night to Grenade, fifteen miles below Toulouse; and a bridge having been quickly thrown over, a battery of thirty guns was established to protect it, and three divisions of infantry and three brigades of cavalry immediately passed over, which captured a large herd of oxen intended for the French army. But meanwhile a catastrophe, threatening the most terrible consequences, ensued. The river rose again in raging torrents: the light division, and Spaniards, intended to follow the leading division, could not be got across; the grappling-irons and supports were swept away; and, to avoid total destruction, it became necessary to take up the pontoons and dismantle the bridge, leaving Beresford, with fifteen thousand foot and three thousand horse, exposed alone to the attack of the whole French army, of at least double their strength.

79. Soult was immediately made acquainted with this passage, but he was not at first aware of the small amount of force which was got across; and when he did learn it, he deemed it more advisable to await the enemy in the position he had fortified with such care at Toulouse, than to incur the chance of a combat, even with such superior forces, on the banks of the Garonne. He remained, accordingly, from the 4th to the 8th, immovable in his intrenched position, and thereby lost one of the fairest opportunities of attempting a serious, if not decisive blow against the British army, which had occurred. Wellington, during this terrible interval, remained tranquil on the other side, ready to cross over in person by boat the moment Beresford was attacked. He was confident in his troops, even against two-

fold odds; and, having done his utmost to avert danger, calmly awaited the result. He has since been heard to say that he felt no disquietude, and never slept sounder in his life than on those three nights. At length, on the morning of the 8th, the river having subsided, the bridge was again laid down. Freyre's Spaniards and the Portuguese artillery were crossed over; and Wellington, taking the command in person, advanced up the valley of the Ers to Fenouillet, within five miles of Toulouse. Hill, with two divisions, was left to menace the suburb of St Ciprien on the left bank of the river; and the pontoon bridge was brought higher up, so as to facilitate the communication between him and the main body of the army. In the course of the advance towards the town, a sharp cavalry action took place at the bridge of Croix d'Auroute, over the Ers, where Vial's dragoons were overthrown by the 18th hussars, led by Major Hughes, the bridge carried, and a hundred prisoners taken, with hardly any loss to the British troops.

80. From the heights to which Wellington had now advanced, he had a distinct view of the French position, which he carefully studied. The whole of the next day was spent in bringing up the troops, which was not completely effected till the evening of the 9th, and in preparing for the battle. It must be admitted that Soult's measures had been conducted with great ability, and that his judicious selection of Toulouse as his battle-field, had almost restored the chances of success in his favour. He had gained seventeen days of perfect rest for his troops, during which they had been sheltered from the weather, and both their physical strength and spirit essentially improved. He had brought the enemy to fight with an equality of force; for one-third of the British army was on the opposite bank before St Ciprien—a fortress so strong in front, and secure in flank, that a small body of conscripts might be there securely left to combat them. The main body, under Soult's immediate command,

was posted on the rugged summit of Mont Rave, called the plateau of Calvinet, in an elevated position about two miles long, and strengthened on either flank by strong fieldworks. This formidable position could be reached only by crossing first a marshy plain, in some places impassable from the artificial inundations of the Ers, and then a long and steep hill, exposed to the fire of the artillery and redoubts on the summit. All the bridges of the Ers, except the Croix d'Auraote, were mined; and it was therefore necessary for the British army to make a flank-march under fire, so as to gain the eastern slope of the Mont Rave, and ascend the hill from that side. If the summit of the ridge should be carried, there remained the interior line, formed by the canal, with its fortified bridge, houses, and suburbs, and, within it again, a third line, formed of the walls of the ancient city, planted with cannon, which it was scarcely possible to carry without regular approaches or an enormous slaughter.

81. Having carefully examined the enemy's ground, Wellington adopted the following plan of attack. Hill, on the left bank, was to menace St Ciprien, so as to distract the enemy's attention in that quarter, and prevent their sending any succours to the right bank of the river; Picton and Alten, with the third and light divisions, Freyre's Spaniards, and Bock's heavy dragoons, were to advance against the northern extremity of the enemy's line, and if possible carry the hill of Pujade, so as to restrain the enemy in that quarter; but they were not to endeavour to carry the summit of the ridge. Meanwhile Beresford, with the fourth and sixth divisions, with Ponsonby's dragoons, and three batteries of cannon, after crossing the Ers at the Croix d'Auraote, was to defile along the low ground between Mont Rave and the marshy banks of the Ers, and having gained the extreme French right, to wheel into line, ascend the hill there, and assault the redoubts of St Sypière on the summit. This plan of operations was perhaps un-

avoidable, and it certainly promised to distract the enemy by three attacks — at St Ciprien, the hill of Pujade, and St Sypière at once. But it was open to the serious disadvantage of dividing the main body of the army into two different columns, separated by above two miles from each other; while the enemy, in concentrated masses, lay on the hill above them, and might crush either separately before the other could come to its assistance. It was exactly a repetition of the allied cross-march, on the flank of which Soult had fallen with such decisive effect at Austerlitz [*ante*, Chap. XL § 129]; or of Marmont's undue extension to his left, towards Ciudad Rodrigo, of which Wellington had so promptly availed himself, to the ruin of the French, at Salamanca [*ante*, Chap. LXVIII. § 71]. Singular coincidence! that in the very last battle of the war, the one commander should have repeated the hazardous movements which, when committed by his adversary, had proved fatal to the French cause in the Peninsula; and the other failed to take that advantage of it by which he himself had formerly, under Napoleon's direction, decided the contest in Germany.

82. Secure under cover of his numerous intrenchments on the long summit of the Mont Rave, and in the suburb of St Ciprien, Soult calmly awaited the attack. Reille, with the division Maransin, was in St Ciprien, opposed to Hill in the external defences of that suburb on the other side of the river; d'Erlon occupied the line on the right bank, from the mouth of the canal to the plateau of Calvinet; Daricau being at the bridge of Matabian, and d'Armagnac in reserve behind the northern extremity of the Mont Rave. Villatte was on the summit of the hill of Pujade, at the northern corner of the plateau; Harispe's men occupied the works in the centre; from thence to the extreme right Taupin's division was placed, a little in advance, with the summit of St Sypière strongly occupied. This division was originally posted in St Ciprien, but was early in the day moved to the more

menaced point on the right. Berton's cavalry were in the low grounds near the Era, to observe the movements of the enemy; Travot's division, composed chiefly of conscripts, held the fortified suburb of St Michel to the bridge of Matabian; and the National Guard of Toulouse lined the ramparts, and performed the service of the interior of the town.

83. The forces on the opposite sides were unequal in point of numbers, but nearly matched in military strength: the Anglo-Portuguese around Toulouse being fifty-two thousand, including seven thousand horse and sixty-four pieces of cannon; but of these twelve thousand were Spaniards, who could not be relied on for a serious shock. The French had nearly forty thousand, of whom thirty-eight thousand were brought into the field, in-

* The battle of Toulouse being the last in the Peninsular contest, and a pitched battle of no ordinary interest and importance, has given rise to much discussion between the military historians of France and England. The former have laboured hard to diminish the effective French force in the field, while they magnified the British; and one of them, Choumara, has even gone so far as to claim for Marshal Soult and his countrymen the merit of a victory on the occasion. The Brit-

cluding Travot's reserve, but exclusive of the National Guard of Toulouse; and they had eighty pieces of cannon, some of them of very heavy calibre. The superiority in respect of numbers was clearly on the side of the Allies; but this might be considered as compensated in point of effective force by the great strength of the French position, their local advantage—as lying in the centre of a vast circle of which the Allies moved on the circumference—the triple line of intrenchments on which they had to fall back in case of disaster, the heavy artillery which crowned their fieldworks, and the homogeneous quality of their troops, all French, and containing that intermixture of young and veteran soldiers which often forms not the worst foundation for military prowess.* Both sides were animated with the most

ish numbers in the field are exactly known, as the Morning State of the whole army on 10th April is extant, and has been published by Colonel Napier, vi. 710. The French numbers cannot be so accurately ascertained, as no imperial muster-rolls subsequent to December 1813 remain. The statement in the text is founded on the detail of their army, as given by the able and impartial military historian Koch; with the amount of Travot's reserve from Vaudoncourt, iii. 107.

I. ALLIED FORCE.

	Present, effective.
4th Division, Cole,	4,613
6th Division, Clinton,	4,877
8d Division, Picton,	8,924
Light Division, Alten,	3,709
2d Division, Stewart,	5,990
Le Cor's Portuguese,	3,807
Rank and File, bayonets,	26,420
Officers, Sergeants, &c.,	2,872
Infantry,	29,292
Artillery,	6,832
Cavalry,	3,600
British and Portuguese,	39,724
Spaniards,	12,000
Total,	51,724

II. FRENCH FORCE.

Infantry,	30,000
Cavalry,	3,000
Travot's reserve,	4,000
	37,000
Artillery and drivers,	1,480
Total,	38,480

—*Morning State*, 10th April 1814; NAPIER, vi. 670; KOCH, iii. 639, and Tableau xiv. for the details.

heroic resolution; for they were alike aware that their long struggle was drawing to a termination, and that victory or defeat now would crown the glories of the one, or partially obliterate the humiliation of the other.

84. Wellington gave the signal for the commencement of the battle at seven o'clock in the morning. Picton and Alten drove the French advanced posts between the river and the hill of Pujade back to their fortified positions on the canal; Hill forced them into their exterior line at St Ciprien; while Clinton and Cole, at the head of the fourth and sixth divisions, rapidly defiled over the bridge of Croix d'Auraete, and after driving the enemy out of the village of Mont Blanc, continued their march along the margin of the Era, sheltered by Freyre's Spaniards, who established themselves on the summit of the Pujade, from whence the Portuguese guns opened a heavy fire on the more elevated fortified heights of the Calvinet. The way having been thus cleared, Beresford, with Cole and Clinton's divisions, preceded by the hussars, continued their march at as swift a pace as they could, along the level ground between the foot of the ridge and the Era. But the plain was found to be extremely marshy, and in many places intersected by water-courses, which retarded the troops not a little; while Berton's cavalry vigorously skirmished with the British horse in front, and a fierce fire from the summit of Mont Rave in flank often tore their ranks by its repeated discharges. Nothing could be more critical than this flank-march, with less than thirteen thousand men, in such a hollow way, with a superior force strongly posted on the ridge on their right, and an impassable morass and river on their left. Fortune seemed to have thrown her choicest favours in the way of the French marshal; and to complete the danger of Beresford's situation, a disaster, well-nigh attended with fatal consequences, soon occurred on his right, which seemed to render nearly the whole force on the summit of the Calvinet disposable to

crush the column painfully toiling on at its foot.

85. While Arentschild's guns were replying by a distant cannonade from the lower summit of the Pujade to the elevated works on the Calvinet, Freyre's Spaniards advanced in good order to assault the northern angle of the redoubts on the latter heights. They were about nine thousand strong, and mounted the hill at first with great resolution, driving before them a French brigade, which retired skirmishing up to the works in the rear. But when the Spaniards came within range of grape-shot, the heavy artillery on the summit, sweeping down a smooth sloping glacis, which enabled every shot to take effect, produced such a frightful carnage in front, while the great guns from the redoubt at Matabian tore their flank, that the first line, instead of recoiling, rushed wildly forward, with the instinct of brave men, to gain the shelter of a hollow road which ran like a dry ditch in front of the works. In great confusion they reached this covered-way; but the second line, seeing the disorder in front, turned about and fled. Upon this the French, leaping with loud shouts out of their works, ran down to the upper edge of the hollow, and plied the unhappy men who had sought refuge there with such a deadly fire of musketry that it was soon little more than a quivering mass of wounded or dying. Freyre and the superior officers, with extraordinary gallantry, strove to rally the fugitives, and actually brought back the second line in tolerable order to the edge of the fatal hollow. But there they suddenly found themselves torn in flank by the discharge of a French brigade, which they had not hitherto seen: "the fire from above was so violent, and the spectacle beneath them so horrid, that,

* One Spanish regiment, the Tiradores de Cantabria, in the midst of this terrific carnage retained their post in the hollow way under the redoubts, when their comrades were routed, till Wellington ordered them to retire. — WELLINGTON to LORD BATHURST, 12th April 1814; GURWOOD, xi. 686; and TRENCH, v. 463.

after hesitating a moment, they broke and fled in wild confusion down the slope towards the bridge of Croix d'Auracte, closely followed by the French, plying them with an incessant fire of musketry. Such was the panic, that the fugitives poured in wild disorder to the bridge, and the French would have made themselves masters of it, thus entirely isolating Beresford from the rest of the army, had not Wellington, who was there, checked the pursuit by the reserve artillery and Ponsonby's horse; while a brigade of the light division, wheeling to its left, threw in its fire so opportunely on the flank of the pursuers, that they were constrained to return to their intrenchments on the summit of the hill.

86. This bloody repulse, which cost the Spaniards fully fifteen hundred men, was not the only disaster on the right. Picton, with the third division, had been instructed merely to engage the enemy's attention by a false attack; but when he beheld the rout on the hill to his left, and the rush of the French troops down the slope after the Spaniards, he conceived the design of turning his feigned into a real attack, supposing that this was the only way of drawing back the enemy, and avoiding total ruin in that quarter of the field. Accordingly, he advanced vigorously, and pushed on to the edge of the counterscarp of the redoubt which defended the bridge of Jumeau over the canal. There, however, all further progress was found to be impracticable, by reason of the extraordinary height of the opposite scarp. Nevertheless Picton's men ran forward, descended into the fosse, and tried, by mounting on each other's shoulders, to reach the top of the wall. All their efforts, however, were fruitless. The troops, being below the range of the guns on the rampart, were overwhelmed by a shower of large stones, arranged for that express purpose along the parapet, and at last driven entirely back, with the loss of five hundred killed and wounded. Thus, all along its northern front, the French position had been found, by dear-bought expe-

rience, to be impregnable; and although Hill had, by a vigorous attack, made himself master of the exterior line of fortifications of St Ciprien, and the Portuguese guns on the hill of Pujade and Beresford's pieces—which it had been found impossible to drag through the miry ground on the edge of the Ers—with the guns of the light division near Matabian, kept up a prodigious concentric fire on the redoubts of Calvint, yet the French cannon on the works above, of heavier calibre, and firing down, replied with superior effect, and the strength of the position on two of the sides yet assailed was unshaken.

87. Everything now depended on the success of Beresford on the extreme British left; yet he was so situated, that it was hard to say whether his divisions were not in greater danger than any other part of the army. Separated now by more than two miles from the remainder of their allies, with their artillery of necessity left behind at Mont Blanc, out of cannon-shot, from the impossibility of dragging it forward—with their rear to an impassable morass and river, and a line of formidable intrenchments in their front—they had to ascend a sloping hill, above a mile in length, exposed all the way to the raking fire of a powerful array of artillery, backed by a formidable army on the summit. But the danger soon became still more pressing, and these two divisions were brought into such straits that there remained only victory or destruction. Soult, relieved by the repulse of the Spaniards from the pressure on his left, and seeing distinctly his advantage, concentrated his troops in hand for a desperate attack on Beresford.*

* "Beresford's divisions marched in three lines, with their flank to us: they presented, in consequence, an extended body: the moment appeared favourable to destroy them. With that view I ordered Taupin, whose division was formed on the plateau, to advance at the *pas de charge* against the enemy, to pierce through his line, and cut off all who were thus imprudently advanced. His division was supported by the division d'Armagnac; it was aided by the fire of the works on the right of the line, in which General Danton was posted with the 9th light infantry;

whom he hoped by a sudden irruption down the hill to cut in two, and sever altogether from the remainder of the army. He had fifteen thousand infantry and twelve hundred horse to make the attack, which promised decisive success. The orders were speedily given. Taupin's division on the summit of the Mont Rave, and one of Maransin's brigades from St Ciprien, were brought forward, supported by Vial's and Berton's dragoons on either flank of the enemy, and directed to fall with the utmost fury on Beresford's men, now entirely destitute of artillery; while d'Armagnac's division supported them as a reserve, and the guns on the summit thundered on the devoted mass below.

88. Taupin's division speedily appeared pouring down from the summit of the hill, flanked by clouds of cavalry, and half concealed by the volumes of smoke which issued from the redoubts above, which now redoubled their fire. Their generals and field-officers were seen in front of the line on horseback, waving their hats amidst the shouts of the multitude, which, mingled with the thunder of the cannon above, resembled the roar of the ocean breaking on an iron-bound shore. Impressed, but not panic-struck, with the sight, the British troops halted in their advance up the hill and deployed. The 79th and 42d Highlanders, who were directly in front, waved their bonnets in the air, and returned the shouts with three cheers: their light company, dispersed as tirailleurs in front, by a well-directed fire, brought down several of the gallant officers who led the enemy's advance, and the French column halted. They immediately discharged a volley into the

British lines, and advanced amidst a deafening roar of musketry and cannon. The French in column, as usual, found they could not withstand the British in line, being unable, from a few companies alone in front, to make any adequate resistance to the deadly volleys of musketry by which they were assailed. The British returned the fire, and advanced to the charge. Lambert's brigade of the sixth division, with Anson's of the fourth, dashed forward with a terrible shout, and the opposite lines seemed madly rushing at each other in the midst of smoke, which on both sides obscured the view. But in that dreadful moment the native superiority of the British courage was apparent. The French quailed before the shock; the lines never met; and when the clouds of smoke cleared away, they were seen wildly flying over the summit of the ridge, closely followed by the British, the 42d and 79th in front, who with loud shouts carried, in the confusion, the redoubt of Sypière. Taupin was killed while bravely endeavouring to rally his men; Vial's horsemen, after being repulsed by the 79th, whom they furiously charged, were swept away in the general rout; while Cole's division, stoutly ascending the hill on Clinton's left, completed the defeat of the enemy in that quarter, and not only solidly established the two divisions on the summit of the ridge on its extreme right, but threatened the enemy's communication by the bridge of Demoiselles with the town of Toulouse.

89. Thus, by the undaunted resolution of Beresford, seconded by the heroic valour of his troops, he had not only extricated himself from a situation of uncommon embarrassment and danger, but established his divisions in force on the right of the enemy's position, and threatened to take all their defences in flank. It was now Soult's turn to feel alarmed, and he instantly made fresh dispositions to guard against the danger. His whole defeated right wing was re-formed, d'Armagnac's reserve brigade brought up with Harispe's division, and a new line of defence taken up, facing out-

while General Soult* received orders to move down with a regiment of cavalry, to cut off the communication on his right between the enemy's column and the remainder of his army, and two other regiments of horse assailed his left flank. These dispositions promised the happiest result; seven or eight thousand English and Portuguese could hardly fail to be taken or destroyed."—MARSHAL SOULT to DUXE DE FELTRE, 11th April 1814; BELMAS, vol. 1. p. 715.

* The son of the Marshal.

wards, stretching from the heights of Calvinet on his left to the intrenchments at the bridge of Demoiselles, on his right; while the remaining portion of the line still retained its old ground, facing the Spaniards and light division, on the northern front of the position. It was the same sort of line forming the two sides of a square, both facing outwards, which the Russians at Eylau, after having repulsed Augereau's attack on their right, found themselves compelled to adopt when suddenly turned by Davoust's successful irruption on their left [*ante*, Chap. XLIV. § 70]. Some hours, however, elapsed before the combat could be renewed; for Beresford, being now firmly planted on the heights, waited, before he again commenced his attack, till he got up his guns from Mont Blanc, which he at length effected. Meanwhile Wellington made all the dispositions in his power to take advantage of his success; but he had no reserve in hand save the light division and Ponsonby's dragoons, as the Spaniards could not be relied on for fresh operations, so that the weight of the remaining contest still fell on Beresford's wing.

90. About three o'clock, the artillery having joined Clinton and Cole's division, Beresford gave orders to advance along the level summit, towards the redoubts in the centre on the Calvinet. Cole was on the top of the ridge, Clinton on the slope down towards Toulouse; while at the same time the Spaniards under Freyre, now re-formed, advanced again to assault the northern end of the Calvinet, and Picton resumed his attack on the bridge of Jumeau. Pack had obtained from Clinton, for the 42d, the perilous honour of heading the assault, and soon the whole advanced in column to the charge. No sooner, however, were the Highland feathers seen rising above the brow of the hill, than so terrible a fire of grape and musketry opened from the works above, that the men involuntarily wheeled by the right into line, and rushed impetuously forward towards the redoubts. They were defended

by bastions fronted with ditches full of water; but so vehement was the rush of the Highland brigade, that the enemy abandoned them before the British got up, and the 42d entered the redoubt by its gorge. The French, however, rallied bravely. Harispe's men, led by their gallant commander, headed the attack, and soon the taken redoubt was surrounded by a surging multitude, which broke into the work, put a large part of the 42d to the sword, and again got possession of that stronghold. The remains driven out, however, rallied on the 71st, 79th, and 92d; and these four Highland regiments, charging to the brow of the hill, fought shoulder to shoulder with such desperate resolution, though sorely reduced in number, that Harispe's men were never able to push them down the slope. Meanwhile the other brigades of Cole and Clinton came up to their assistance; the French, still furiously fighting, were forced back; Harispe and Baurot both fell, badly wounded; the redoubt was retaken by the 79th; and the whole French column, like a vast mass of burning lava, amidst volumes of smoke and fire, was hurled down the hill towards Toulouse.

91. The battle was now gained: for although the Spaniards were repulsed in their fresh attack on the northern angle of the Calvinet, and Picton also failed in his renewed assault on the bridge of Jumeau, yet three-fourths of the Mont Rave was won; its central and southern works were in the hands of the enemy, and his guns commanded the whole suburb of St Etienne, as far as the old walls of the city. In these circumstances, at four o'clock, Soult abandoned the whole remaining works on the Calvinet, and withdrew his troops at all points within the second line of defence, formed by the canal of Languedoc, with its fortified bridge and intrenched suburbs. The Spaniards, seeing the heights abandoned, pressed up the slope which had been the theatre of such sanguinary contention in the earlier part of the day, and the whole allied forces, crossing the ridge, fell on the retiring

columns of the enemy ; but they were arrested by the fire of the *têtes-de-pont*, and at seven o'clock the whole French forces were ranged behind the canal, which formed the line of demarcation between the two armies. At the same time, Hill drove the enemy from their second line of intrenchments, within the old city wall, on the other side of the Garonne ; and Picton pushed the third division up close to the bridge-head of the canal next that river ; while Wellington, having thus cooped the enemy up within the city, and established his army in proud array on the bloodstained summits of the Mont Rave, despatched his cavalry along the banks of the Ers, so as to occupy the Montpellier road, the only remaining issue which was still in the hands of the enemy.

92. Such was the bloody battle of Toulouse, in which, although the victory unquestionably was on the side of the British,* it is hard to say to which of the two gallant armies the prize of valour and devotion is to be awarded. Situated as the French army was, assailed by superior forces, and depressed by a long course of defeats, the heroic stand they made on the Calvignet was among the most honourable of their long and glorious career. It is with a feeling of pride, not for Britain alone, but for the human race, that the English historian has now to take leave of the renowned antagonists of his country in the Peninsula. Nor was the conduct of the British and their allies less worthy of the highest admiration, assailing a force inferior in number, but in a concentrated in-

trenched position, and strengthened with the greatest possible advantages of nature and art. The loss on both sides was very severe, and heavier on that of the Allies than the French, as might naturally be expected in the attack of intrenchments of such strength and so defended. The former lost four thousand five hundred and fifty-eight men, of whom one thousand nine hundred and twenty-eight were Spaniards, six hundred and seven Portuguese, and two thousand one hundred and fourteen British. The French loss was three thousand two hundred killed, wounded, and prisoners, on the field ; and one thousand six hundred men were taken prisoners on the 12th, in Toulouse, including Generals Harispe, Burot, and St Hilaire, who were severely wounded.

93. Soult, four days before the battle, was aware of the taking of Paris on the 29th March preceding ; † but, like a good soldier and faithful servant, he was only confirmed by that disaster in his resolution to defend Toulouse to the last extremity, hoping thus to preserve for the Emperor the capital of the south ; and at the same time he wrote to Suchet, urging him to combine measures for ulterior operations in Languedoc. On the day after the battle he expected to be attacked, and his troops were posted at all points along the canal to resist an assault. But Wellington wisely determined not to trust to chance what was certain by combination. The strength of the enemy's defensive fortifications at the bridge-heads of the canal had been fatally proved on the preceding day : ammunition for the cannon was wanting for a protracted struggle, till supplies were got up from the other side of the river ; and the whole of the 11th was occupied in bringing it across. The attack was fixed for daylight on

* "The battle of Toulouse, in which the Duke of Dalmatia and the Duke of Wellington both claim the victory, was, beyond all question, lost by the former. But it was so dearly bought that the English general was in no condition to follow up his success, and might have been brought into a critical situation, if the French general had known how to avail himself of the advantages he still possessed."—VAUDONCOURT, iii. 128, 129. Three days before the battle, Soult wrote to Suchet : "If by misfortune I should be compelled to abandon Toulouse, my movements will naturally be directed towards you." The abandonment of the town, says Bignon, in his opinion could only be the result of a defeat. See BIGNON, xiii. 137.

† "M. Ricard was with me when I received the distressing intelligence of the entry of the Allies into Paris. That great disaster confirms me in my resolution to defend Toulouse, happen what may. The maintenance of that place, which contains establishments of all kinds, is of the last importance."—SOULT to SUCHET, 7th April 1814 : BELMAS, i. 712, 713.

the 12th; and meanwhile the troops and guns were brought up to the front, and the cavalry pushed on to the heights of St Martin, menacing Soult's line of retreat to Carcassonne. How unwilling soever to relinquish the great and important city of Toulouse, containing his hospitals, magazines, and depots of all sorts, the French general felt that it was no longer tenable, and that, by persisting in retaining it, he would run the hazard of ruining his whole army.* Wherefore, making his arrangements with great ability, he left sixteen hundred wounded, including the gallant Harispe and two other generals, to the humanity of the British general, besides eight heavy guns; and, defiling silently out at nightfall, managed his retreat so expeditiously, that before daybreak he was at Ville Franche, two-and-twenty miles off, on the road to Carcassonne.

94. Wellington entered Toulouse in triumph at noon on the 12th, and met with the most brilliant reception. A large proportion of the inhabitants, including the whole better classes, had already mounted the white cockade, though the intelligence of the dethronement of Napoleon had not yet been received. The people, who the day before had been under mortal apprehensions at being subjected to the horrors of an assault, suddenly found themselves delivered at once from their alarm and their oppression, and the reign of a pacific monarch proclaimed amidst the combined shouts of their enemies and their defenders. Wellington, however, who had hitherto only heard of the capture of Paris, but not of the dethronement of Napoleon and restoration of the Bourbons, expressed no small uneasiness at the declaration thus made in favour of the exiled prince, when, so far as he knew, the allied powers were still negotiating

with Napoleon. "The royal cockade," replied Count Hargicourt, "is in my hat: it shall not fall from it but with my head." Loud applause followed this intrepid declaration; white scarfs immediately waved from every hand, tears glistened in many eyes, and the tricolor flag was supplanted on the city hall by the fleur-de-lis and the white flag. Wellington still trembled for the devoted zeal of the people; but at five o'clock despatches arrived from Paris, announcing the dethronement of Napoleon by the conservative senate, and the proclamation of Louis XVIII. All restraint was now at an end, and the English general could securely give open vent to the feelings which he had long privately entertained. He assumed the white cockade amidst thunders of applause: all his officers did the same. The news circulated in a few minutes through the town: the British soldiers were everywhere decorated with the Royalist colours by fair hands trembling with agitation; and in the close of one of the longest and bloodiest wars recorded in history was exhibited the marvellous spectacle of the white flag, the emblem at once of loyalty and peace, uniting in common transports the victors and the vanquished.

95. These astonishing events, which in effect terminated the war in the south of France, were immediately followed by a formal convention for the termination of hostilities between the rival commanders. Wellington lost no time in making Soult acquainted with the changes at Paris; but the French marshal, faithful to his trust, declined to come to an accommodation till he received official intelligence that the Emperor had really abdicated the throne. Having at length obtained that information, in a way which left no doubt of its authority, he concluded on the 18th a convention with Wellington, by which hostilities were immediately to cease, and the limits of the department of the Haute Garonne, with the departments of the Argege, Aude, and Tarn, were to separate the two armies. The convention stipulated also the cessation of hostilities

* "I am under the necessity of retiring from Toulouse, and I fear I shall be obliged to fight at Bazieg, whither the enemy has directed a column to cut off my communication. To-morrow I shall take position at Ville Franche, and I hope nothing will prevent me from getting through the day after to-morrow at Castelnaudery."—*SOULT to SCHET, 11th April 1814; BELLAS, I. 721.*

at Bayonne, Navarreins, and Bordeaux, as well as on the Catalonian frontier, in which last quarter the boundaries of France and Spain were to be the separating line between the two armies; and the immediate evacuation of all the fortresses yet held by the French in Spain. Suchet, who had entirely withdrawn from Spain immediately before the battle of Toulouse, had already hoisted the white flag before he received intelligence of the convention concluded by Soult on his behalf. Twenty thousand veterans, in the best possible state, and of the utmost experience, were drawn from the fortresses held by the French in Catalonia and Valencia alone, after the conclusion of the convention,—a surprising proof of the tenacity with which Napoleon, even in his last extremity, clung to those distant, and to him pernicious strongholds. But before the intelligence could be communicated to Bayonne, a deplorable event had taken place, which threw a gloom over the glorious termination of the Peninsular War.

96. After the departure of Wellington and the main army for the Upper Garonne, and the successful passage of the Adour, which has already been mentioned, Hope exerted himself with the utmost zeal and diligence to forward the siege of Bayonne; the works before which were in such forwardness, that he was ready to attack the citadel when rumours of the events at Paris reached him on the 7th April; but as he had not yet received any official communication on the subject, he of course continued his operations. Official accounts from Paris, however, at last reached the British camp, and were by Hope forwarded to Thouvenot, the governor of the fortress, who returned for answer, that the besiegers should hear from him on the subject before long. It would appear he had resolved on finishing the war with a brilliant exploit, which was the more likely to succeed, as the British, considering the contest as virtually at an end, might be supposed to be somewhat off their guard. Accordingly, at three o'clock on the morning of the 14th, the French,

commencing with a false attack on the left of the Adour as a blind, suddenly poured out of the citadel to the number of three thousand men, broke through the line of pickets, and with a violent rush and loud shouts carried the whole village of St Etienne, with the exception of a house occupied by a picket of the 38th under Captain Forster, which with heroic valour maintained its ground till General Hinuber came up with some of the German Legion. Soon after a battalion of Portuguese arrived, who retook the village, after a tremendous struggle, at the point of the bayonet, and drove the enemy back towards the works. Meanwhile the guns of the citadel, guided by the flashes of musketry, fired incessantly on the scene of combat; the gunboats, which had dropped down the stream, opened upon the flanks of the fighting columns, without being able to distinguish friend from foe; and amidst the incessant clang of small arms, and alternate cheers of the combatants, the deep booming of a hundred guns added to the horrors of this awful nocturnal combat.

97. On the right the conflict was still more terrible. The pickets and reserves were forced back by the vehement fury of the onset; the troops on both sides, broken into small bodies by the enclosures, and unable to recover their companies or even their regiments during the darkness, fought bayonet to bayonet, sword to sword, man to man, with the most determined resolution. Never had such fury been exhibited on both sides during the whole course of the war; never were wounds of so desperate a character inflicted on the warriors engaged. In the midst of this scene of horror, Sir John Hope, ever foremost where danger was to be met or heroism displayed, was hurrying to the front in a hollow way, when he met a British picket retiring before a large body of French. "Why do you retreat?" cried he. "The enemy are yonder," was the answer. "Well, then, we must drive them back," he replied, and spurring his charger, himself led them again to the attack. The French immediately gave a point-

blank discharge, the general fell, wounded in two, his horse in eight, places, and he was made prisoner. But now the day was beginning to dawn; the troops rallied in all directions; and the reserve brigade of the Guards, led by General Howard, rushed forward in the finest order with the bayonet, and drove the broken and almost frantic mass, with terrible slaughter, back into the works. In this melancholy combat, fought after peace had been concluded, the British lost eight hundred and thirty men, including the gallant General Hay, who fell early in the fight; but the French loss was nine hundred and ten,—a catastrophe severely felt by the limited numbers of the garrison, which, if the war had continued, must speedily have led to the fall of the place.

98. The convention prevented serious hostilities being renewed on the Lower Garonne. Napoleon had collected a considerable force on the other side of that river; and Lord Dalhousie, who had succeeded to the command of the British force at Bordeaux, crossed it on the 4th of April to attack them. The combat was soon decided: the enemy, about two thousand strong, fled on the first onset, and the British cavalry, charging, made three hundred prisoners. At the same time Admiral Penrose, ascending the river in spite of the batteries at its mouth, burned a large flotilla at Castillon; so that the whole line of the Garonne, from Toulouse to the sea, with the intermediate country from thence to the Pyrenees, had, before the war ceased, with the exception of the fortress of Bayonne, been wrested from the French. Decaens, who had collected eight thousand men in La Vendée and the western provinces, could not have made head against Dalhousie, who commanded above twelve thousand. The whole infantry of the British army embarked at Bordeaux, some to America, some for Great Britain, loaded with honours, immortal in fame; Wellington and his staff soon after proceeded to Paris, to take part in the momentous negotiations there going forward; and the British cavalry, in number

above seven thousand, marched in triumph by Orleans across France, and embarked for their own country from the harbour of Calais.

99. Though both the rival commanders displayed the most consummate ability in the short but active campaign which preceded the battle of Toulouse, it may yet be doubted whether the conduct of either, at or shortly before the battle, is not open to criticism. On occasion of the three divisions of the British army, not more than sixteen thousand strong, even including cavalry and artillery, being left for three days close to Soult, who had thirty thousand disposable troops wherewith to assail them—on the opposite side of the Garonne from the remainder of the army, without the possibility of sending over succours to them, from the flooded state of the river—the French marshal lost an opportunity of striking a decisive blow, such as is rarely presented to the most fortunate commander. Picton, who commanded one of the divisions which had crossed, always said that the French general evinced on that occasion a degree of vacillation which he could not have expected from his well-known abilities. Nor did he, on the field of battle itself, act with the vigour or decision which was requisite to obtain the proper advantage, from the extraordinary facilities of his situation. When Bercford moved with his two divisions so far to the left, and separated by two miles from the rest of the army, if Soult had thrown his whole disposable forces at once upon him, he would probably have achieved as decisive a success as Wellington did in a similar situation at Salamanca. When he did make the attack, he sent forward only Taupin's division and one of d'Armagnac's brigades, a force inadequate to the encounter in the open field of twelve thousand British troops; and by their defeat he lost the battle. Half measures here, as they do everywhere else, ruined everything: by sending this limited force, hardly half of what at the moment he had at his disposal, out of his redoubts, he paralysed the fire of their guns, lest they should de-

stroy their own men, while he brought forward no sufficient body to crush the enemy in the open field.

100. Wellington's measures appear, on the field at least, to have been somewhat inconsiderate. To push Beresford forward with thirteen thousand men by a long flank march, immediately under the eye of Soult, posted on the heights above with a larger amount of disposable troops, seems at least a very questionable proceeding. If Soult in person, with the iron arm of Napoleon, had struck at this detached corps when two miles off, at the head of twenty thousand men, where would the British army have been? The policy is not very apparent of intrusting the attack of the redoubts of Mount Calvinet, the key of the whole position, to the brave but unsteady Spanish troops; while Picton, with his heroic third division, and Hill, with another British division, were engaged, the one in a false attack on the bridge of Jumeau, the other in a distant and immaterial operation against the suburb of St Ciprien. The truth appears to be, that Soult, by a long train of disasters, had become timorous and distrustful of his troops, in all but the defence of fortified positions; and Wellington, from an uninterrupted career of victory, had almost forgotten that his men could ever be put to the hazard of defeat. Perhaps this circumstance affords the best vindication of both; for experience had too sorely impressed upon the one his apprehensions, and success almost justified any anticipations of triumphant extrication from difficulties to the other.

101. The endeavour, however, which is made by an ingenious French writer, to convert the battle of Toulouse into a victory for the arms of his country, is altogether hopeless. It is ridiculous to see such an attempt made in the face of Soult's written admission three days before the battle, already quoted, that the preservation of Toulouse was of such incalculable importance to him, as containing his magazines and establishments of all sorts; and of his admission in his letter to Suchet, the day after the battle, that he could no longer

maintain it, followed by his evacuation of the town, and forced march of twenty-two miles that very night. The ridge of the Mont Rave was the elevated ground for which both parties fought: when it was carried by the British, Toulouse was as indefensible as Paris was when Montmartre and Belleville had fallen. The case of Wellington retiring from the ridge of Busaco, the day after the battle at that place [*ante*, Chap. LXIII. § 71], to which Choumara wishes to parallel it, is not an analogous but an opposite instance, and brings out the true distinction on the subject. The whole ridge of Busaco was maintained by the British, despite Massena's attack; and the turning their position by the pass of Sardao, and forcing them to fall back to Coimbra, was in no way whatever the consequence of the battle. At Toulouse, the carrying of the ridge of the Mont Rave and the redoubts of Calvinet rendered Soult's position in that town wholly untenable; for the British guns commanded the city, and their cavalry cut off the only French communications left to them with Carcassonne and Suchet's forces. It was the possession of the heights of the Mont Rave, won by Beresford, that alone gave Wellington this advantage. If Massena had won the ridge of Busaco, and driven the British to a position half-way down the mountain on the other side, and thus menaced the pass of Sardao, and forced them to retreat, no British writer would have thought of claiming the victory. Nor would they do so at Toulouse, if Beresford had been repulsed as Picton and the Spaniards were, and the works of Calvinet had remained in the hands of the French, and they had evacuated them two days afterwards, only in consequence of a flank movement of Wellington threatening the French general's communication with Suchet.

102. All that remains to narrate, before describing the final catastrophe at Paris, is the concluding operations of Lord William Bentinck and the Anglo-Sicilian army on the coast of Italy. The second detachment of the expedi-

tion having arrived from Catalonia, Bentinck, being now at the head of twelve thousand men, moved forward by the coast of the Mediterranean to La Spezia, which was occupied on the 29th March. Thence he advanced by the coast road, through the romantic defiles of the Apennines, so well known to travellers, to Sestri, where the enemy's forces, about six thousand strong, were posted. From this strong position, however, the French were driven with great loss on the 8th; and from thence the Allies advanced, fighting at every step, and gradually forcing their way through the ravines in the mountains, till the 13th, when General Montresor established himself in an advanced position near the town; and on the 16th the whole army was concentrated in front of Genoa. The enemy were there very strongly posted on the almost inaccessible ridges which surround that noble city, supported by forts and external works, their left resting on the castles of Richelieu and Tecla, their centre in the village of San Martino, and their right on the sea; the whole line passing through a country thickly studded with gardens, villas, enclosures, and all the impediments of suburban scenery.

103. Such, however, was the vigour of the attack on the day following, being the 17th, that the whole position was speedily carried. The second battalion of the third Italian regiment stormed Fort Tecla; another battalion of the same regiment, with a body of Calabrese, surmounted the rocky heights above Fort Richelieu, and compelled the garrison to capitulate. The French upon this retired within the town, and the Allies took up a position within six hundred yards of the ramparts, where preparations were immediately made for establishing breach-batteries, and carrying the place by assault. To prevent such a catastrophe, the governor proposed to capitulate; and after some difficulties about the terms, a convention was concluded, in virtue of which the French garrison was to march out with the honours of war and six pieces of cannon, and retire to Nice. The same day the British took

possession; and thus was this magnificent fortress, which, under Massena in 1800, had held out so long against the Austrians, at once carried by the English forces, with immense stores of every kind, and two ships of the line and four brigs; all with the loss only of forty killed and a hundred and sixty wounded.

104. In the proceedings which immediately followed this important acquisition, Bentinck, without any authority from his government, gave the inhabitants reason to believe that it was the intention of the Allies to restore them to their former state of independence and republican government, as they had existed before the French Revolution.* These announcements excited unbounded joy and gratitude at the time, and proportional dissatisfaction arose, when considerations of general policy, and, in fact, absolute necessity, rendered it unavoidable to incorporate them, even against their will, with the Sardinian monarchy. Meanwhile, the Austrian general Bellegarde signed a convention with Murat, providing for the more vigorous prosecution of the war on the Po, and the final expulsion of the French from Italy. But the King of Naples, anxious to gain time, and to see the course of events on the Seine before he adopted a decisive course on the Po, adjourned, on various pretexts, the performance of his part of the contract; and it was not till the 13th that Bellegarde succeeded in prevailing upon him to put his troops in motion. On

* "Warriors of Italy! only call and we will hasten to your relief; and then Italy, by our united efforts, shall become what she was in her most prosperous period, and what Spain now is."—LORD W. BENTINCK'S *Proclamation*, March 14, 1814. "Considering that the general wish of the Genoese is to return to their ancient form of government, I declare: 1. That the constitution of the Genoese States, such as it existed in 1797, with those modifications which the general wish, the public good, and the spirit of the original constitution of 1797 seem to require, is re-established."—LORD W. BENTINCK'S *Proclamation*, April 26, 1814; *Parl. Deb.* xxx. 393, 394. These proclamations were at variance with Bentinck's instructions, which were to do nothing that might fetter the hands of the Allies, in the final disposal of the Genoese territories.

that day, however, he forced the Taro, after a vigorous resistance on the part of the French general Maucune; and on the day following the passage of the Stura was also effected, after a sharp conflict. These actions, in which the French lost fifteen hundred men, were of sinister augury to the cause of the Viceroy in Italy; but the further prosecution of hostilities was prevented by the intelligence which arrived next day, of the capitulation of Paris, and dethronement of Napoleon. A convention was immediately concluded with the Austrian generals; in virtue of which Palma-Nuova, Osopo, Venice, and Legnago were immediately surrendered to their troops. Eugene's armaments were soon after dissolved; everything was placed on a new footing; the whole of Lombardy was occupied by the Germans; and in the first week of May the French troops FINALLY REPASSED THE ALPS, not without casting from the summit of Mont Cenis a "longing, lingering look behind" at that classic land, which they had won by their valour and lost by their oppression.

105. To complete the picture of the French empire, as it was submitted to the consideration of Napoleon at Rheims in the middle of March, when he took his final determination as to the congress of Châtillon, it only remains to cast a last glance over the vast fortresses, once the bulwarks of his mighty dominions, which still remained in the hands of his generals on the other side of the Rhine. Glogau, blockaded since the 17th August 1813, capitulated from want of provisions on the 10th April, and the garrison, still three thousand three hundred strong, became prisoners of war. Cüstrin fell on the 30th March, with its garrison of three thousand. Wittenberg had been more actively besieged: trenches were opened against it in the beginning of January; and it was carried by assault on the 15th, fifteen hundred men having been made prisoners. The citadel of Würzburg fell, as did the two of Erfurth, long closely blockaded,—the former on the 21st March, with fifteen hundred men; the latter,

with two thousand, in the beginning of May. Magdeburg, with its garrison, now swelled by stragglers from the French army, who had sought refuge within its walls after the retreat from the Elbe, to eighteen thousand men, presented a more important object. The blockade was loosely maintained by successive bodies of allied troops as they advanced from Russia, or were equipped in the adjoining provinces of Prussia, from the 26th of October till the final capitulation took place in the middle of May. Several sorties were made to collect provisions, particularly in the beginning of January, and on the 1st of April; on which last occasion, eight thousand men were engaged in the attack, and were not repulsed without considerable difficulty. An armistice was concluded on the 14th April, as soon as the events at Paris were known; but it was not till the 19th May that the place was finally evacuated, when General Lemarrois led back to France the divisions Lanusse and Lemoine, still fourteen thousand strong, besides four thousand Italians, Spaniards, and Croatians, who were dismissed to their respective homes.

106. Davoust, in Hamburg, as already noticed, had been blockaded by Benningsen, with a large part of the Russian army of reserve, immediately after the battle of Leipsic. General Strogonoff at first had the command, but he was replaced in the end of January by Benningsen in person, who thenceforward took the direction of that important operation. On the 20th January, a serious attack took place on the fort of Harburg, and the island of Wilhelmsburg: the first proved successful, but in the latter the Russians were repulsed with the loss of seven hundred men. The hard frost which now succeeded, so well known and severely felt over all Europe, having completely frozen the Elbe, the Russian general resolved to take advantage of it to effect the reduction of the island of Wilhelmsburg, without the command of which he had become sensible that no operations, with any degree of certainty, could be car-

ried on against the body of the fortress. Repeated attacks took place on the 9th, 17th, and 24th of February, and on the 5th and 11th of March. But such was the tenacity of Marshal Davoust, and the vigour of his resistance, that, although the Russians repeatedly got footing in the island, they were always, in the end, repulsed with very severe loss. Upwards of four thousand men were lost to both sides in these bloody combats, which led to no decisive results; and at length Benningsen, despairing of dispossessing the enemy by main force, strengthened the blockade, and trusted to the slower and more certain effects of disease and scarcity. The city, already pillaged and woe-struck to an unparalleled degree by the merciless exactions of the French marshal, was now threatened with the combined horrors of plague, pestilence, and famine, when a period was fortunately put to its sufferings by the fall of Napoleon, which was followed by a suspension of arms on the 18th April. In consequence of that event, the garrison, in the end of May, still thirteen thousand strong, besides three thousand sick and wounded in the hospitals, set out on their return to France. Wesel, with its garrison of ten thousand men, long blockaded by Borstel's Prussians, was finally evacuated on the 10th May.

107. Thus, while Napoleon at Rheims, with his heroic band of followers, not forty thousand strong, was maintaining a doubtful struggle with the vast masses of the allied forces, above seventy thousand of his veteran troops were blockaded in the fortresses still held by his lieutenants beyond the Rhine and the Pyrenees,—an extraordinary fact, and speaking volumes as to the

disastrous effect which the obstinate retention of those distant strongholds had upon the fortunes of the empire. Nothing can be more evident than that it was his determination to abandon nothing that made him lose everything. Nor is there any foundation for the remark, that if the Emperor had withdrawn these garrisons to augment his forces in the interior, the blockading troops would have formed an equal or greater addition to the armies of the Allies. For these besieging corps, though very numerous, were for the most part composed of landwehr and new levies, wholly unfit for operations in the field, though perfectly adequate to the duties of a blockade, while the garrisons they held in check were the best troops at that period in the French service. The armies, too, with which the Allies invaded France, were so numerous, that it was with the utmost difficulty they could find subsistence, and an additional host of mouths would have been an encumbrance rather than an advantage; whereas seventy thousand veterans added to Napoleon's armies in the plains of Champagne, might have hurled back the Allies with disgrace to the Rhine.

108. It was want of men—the utter exhaustion of his military resources—which in the end proved his ruin. And yet, at that very time, he had veteran soldiers in abundance, voluntarily exiled by him from their country. Perplexed and wearisome as the details of the breaking up, in all its extent, of so immense a dominion necessarily are, the pains of investigating them will not be deemed lost when it leads to such a result as this; and demonstrates the decisive influence which the necessity of nowhere receding, and maintaining to the last the principle "*tout ou rien*," had upon the ultimate fate of the Revolution. Dark and mournful, however, as was the intelligence which on every side pressed on the Emperor at Rheims, it had no effect in shaking his determination. The disasters which have been enumerated, which accumulated "round a sinking throne and falling

* Viz. —

In Catalonia and Santona [ante, chap. lxxxvii. § 72]	21,500
Hamburg,	16,000
Wesel,	10,000
Cüstrin,	8,000
Wittenberg,	1,500
Magdeburg,	18,000
Würzburg,	1,500
Erfurth,	2,000

Total, 73,500

—VAUDONCOURT, III. 186, 141; SUCHET, II. 517.

empire," were all, with the exception of the taking of Lyons and Genoa, and the battle of Toulouse, known to him when he took his final resolution to refuse the terms proposed to him at Châtillon; but still he would not consent to abandon Antwerp and the frontier of the Rhine.

109. The terms which the allied sovereigns proposed to Napoleon in the close of the conferences at Châtillon, were the cession, by Napoleon, of the whole conquests made by France since 1792: the abandonment of the title of Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine, Mediator of Switzerland, and King of Italy: the reconstruction of all the countries adjoining France in an independent form,—in particular, the organisation of Germany in a federal union; of Italy in independent states, between the Austrian possessions and the French frontier; the independence of Switzerland as a separate republic; the formation of a kingdom in Holland for the house of Orange; and lastly, the restoration of the Peninsular thrones to the houses of Braganza and Bourbon. In return for these demands, the British government consented to restore the whole French colonies conquered by them during the war, with the exception of the isles of Saintes and Tobago in the West, and the isles of Mauritius and Bourbon in the East Indies. Malta was to remain in the hands of the English; but Sweden and Portugal were to restore Guadaloupe and Cayenne. So noble and disinterested was the use which Great Britain made of the immense sacrifices and unbounded ultimate triumphs of the war, that all the exactions she required of France were for the security of her continental Allies; and peace was to bring to Napoleon a restitution of fully four-fifths of the conquests which Great Britain had made of his transmarine possessions. On these terms the Allies offered to recognise Napoleon as Emperor of France, and immediately conclude peace, leaving him as great an empire as had been enjoyed by Louis XIV.; and to possess which, Frederick the Great said, was "the bright

est dream which a sovereign could form."* Metternich, who was sincerely desirous of an accommodation, was careful throughout to warn the Emperor, that he need not expect the cabinet of Vienna to detach itself from the other allied powers in this negotiation. "It is impossible," said he to Caulaincourt, "to be more united than we are in thoughts, views, and principles. If the Emperor Napoleon, in the present grave circumstances, listens only to the voice of reason; if he seeks his glory in the happiness of his people, renouncing his former ideas of political supremacy, the Emperor Francis will look back with satisfaction to the moment when he confided to him the daughter of his heart. If a fatal blindness renders your master deaf to the unanimous voice of his people and the wish of Europe, the Emperor of Austria will deplore the fate of his daughter, but not swerve from his path.

110. Napoleon having declined to accede to these conditions, Caulaincourt, after a great many delays thrown in the way, to gain time for the military successes of the Emperor to influence in the manner he desired the progress of the negotiations, at length on the 10th March gave in what he termed a counter-project; but which, in effect, was nothing but an able argument on the part of the French government against the terms proposed by the Allies. "The powers declared," said he, "only three months ago at Frankfort, that they wished to establish a just equilibrium in Europe.

* "I will always hold to you the same language; it should be appreciated by men of sense, who really desire the good of their country. We have but one wish, that of peace; but that peace is impossible, if you will not make the sacrifices necessary to regain your possessions beyond the seas. To arrive at that peace it is necessary to be equally prepared for the means by which it is to be obtained, and not to forget that England disposes *alone* of all the compensations possible; and that, in agreeing to denude herself, in favour of France, of *almost the whole of her conquests*, she is entitled to insist that France shall be replaced on a level with the other great powers on the Continent." — METTERNICH to CAULAINCOURT, March 8, 1814; FAIR, 305, 306; *Pièces Just.*

They profess the same desire now. To maintain the same *relative* position which she always enjoyed, is the only real wish of France. But Europe does not at this time resemble what she was twenty years ago. At that period the kingdom of Poland, already partitioned, disappeared entirely; the immense empire of Russia received vast and rich provinces; six millions of men were added to dominions already more extensive than any sovereign in Europe enjoyed; while nine millions fell to the lot of Austria and Prussia. Soon the face of Germany was changed. The ecclesiastical states and most of the free cities were divided among the secular princes; Prussia and Austria received the greater part of them. The ancient republic of Venice became a province of Austria: two millions of subjects, with new territories and new resources, were given to Russia by the treaty of Tilsit, by that of Vienna, by that of Yassi, by that of Abo. On her own side, and during the same period, England has not only acquired the Dutch possessions of Ceylon and Trinidad, but she has doubled her territories in India, and gained an empire there which two of the greatest monarchies in Europe would hardly equal.

111. "If the population of that empire cannot be considered as an addition to the inhabitants of Great Britain,—on the other hand, she has acquired by their sovereignty and commerce an immense increase of riches, the other great element of power. Russia and England have preserved all that they have acquired; Austria and Prussia have, it is true, sustained losses; but do they abandon all thoughts of repairing them? or will they be now contented with the possessions which they enjoyed before the war? When all has thus changed around France, can it maintain the same relative power, if it is reduced to its original limits? Replaced in its original state, it would be far from enjoying the same influence or security, when the power of its neighbours has so immensely increased. England can only be attacked by sea: Russia, backed

by the pole, and flanked on either side by inaccessible and boundless solitudes, can be invaded, since the acquisition of Finland, only on one side. France, half commercial and half territorial, is open to attack on all sides both by sea and land, on both which elements she is brought immediately in contact with valiant nations."

112. The allied plenipotentiaries, upon receiving this counter-project, declared that this memoir was no answer to their ultimatum, and were on the point of breaking up the conferences; when Caulaincourt, overwhelmed with apprehension at the immediate and probable result of such a rupture, proposed verbally, on the part of the Emperor, that he should renounce all supremacy or constitutional influence in countries beyond the limits of France; recognise the independence of Spain in its old limits, under the sovereignty of Ferdinand VII; admit the independence of Switzerland, under the guarantee of the allied powers, that of Germany under its native princes, and that of Holland, under the sovereignty of the Prince of Orange. This was followed three days afterwards by a more detailed counter-project on the part of Napoleon, of the same general tenor, but in which he still eluded any answer to the requisition of the Allies, that France should be restored to its limits as in 1792, and held out for the possession of Antwerp, Flanders, and the frontier of the Rhine. He insisted also that the Ionian Islands should be annexed to the kingdom of Italy, and that both should be settled on Prince Eugene and his descendants, with the Adige as a boundary on the side of Austria; that Saxony should be restored entire; that the sovereignty of Lucca and Piombino should be secured to his sister the Princess Eliza; the principality of Neuchâtel to Berthier; and that all the colonies taken during the war, except Saintes, should be restored by Great Britain.

113. This counter-project of Napoleon was met by the following answer on the part of the allied powers: "Europe, allied against the French

government, wishes only the re-establishment of a general peace, continental and maritime. Such a peace can alone give the world repose, of which it has so long been deprived; but that peace cannot subsist without a due partition of force among the different powers. No view of ambition has dictated the proposals made on the part of the Allies in the sitting of 17th February last. France, even when restored to her limits of 1792, is still, from the central nature of her situation, her population, the riches of her soil, the strength of her frontiers, the number and distribution of her fortified places, on a level with the greatest powers on the Continent; the other powers, in consenting to their own reconstruction on a proportional scale, and to the establishment of intermediate independent secondary states, prove at once what are the principles which animate them. England restores to France her colonies, and with them her commerce and her marine. England does more; in denuding herself of nearly the whole of the conquests which she has made during so many years, she is far from advancing any pretensions to the exclusive dominion of the sea, or any right inconsistent with the free enjoyment of commerce by others. Inspired with a spirit of justice and liberality worthy of a great people, England throws into the balance of the Continent acquisitions beyond the sea, of which the possession would secure her for long the exclusive dominion of it. In restoring to France her colonies, in making great sacrifices for the restoration of Holland, which the spirit of the Dutch people renders worthy to resume its place in the European family, the British government are entitled to expect that such sacrifices on their part shall purchase a real and effectual, not a merely nominal equilibrium in Europe; that the political state of Europe shall be such as to afford her a guarantee that these concessions have not been a pure loss on her part—that they will not be turned against Europe and herself.

114. "The counter-project of the

French plenipotentiary proceeds on entirely different principles. According to them, France will retain a territory more extensive than experience has shown to be consistent with the peace of Europe. She will retain those salient points and offensive positions, by the aid of which she has already overturned so many of the adjoining states; the cessions which she proposes to make are only apparent. The principles still announced by the actual sovereign of France, and the dear-bought experience of many years, have proved that adjoining secondary states possessed by members of his family can be independent only in name. Were they to deviate from the principles on which their project of the 17th February rests, the allied sovereigns would have done nothing for the peace or safety of Europe; the efforts of so many sovereigns leagued together for one end would be lost; the weakness of their cabinets would turn at once against themselves and their subjects; Europe, and France itself, would soon become the victims of new convulsions; Europe would not conclude peace, she would only disarm. The allied courts, therefore, considering the counter-project of France as essentially at variance, not merely with the details, but with the spirit of the basis proposed by them, regard any further prolongation of the congress at Châtillon as useless and dangerous: useless, because the proposals of France are opposed to the conditions which the Allies consider necessary to the equilibrium of Europe, and to the reconstruction of the social edifice, to which they are determined to consecrate all the forces with which Providence has intrusted them; dangerous, because the prolongation of sterile negotiations would only inspire the people of Europe with vain expectations of peace. The allied powers, therefore, with regret regard the congress of Châtillon as dissolved; and they cannot separate without declaring that *they make no war upon France*: that they regard the proper dimensions of that empire as one of the first conditions of a proper balance

of power ; but that they will not lay down their arms until their principles have been recognised and admitted by its government."

115. So anxious was Metternich to induce Caulaincourt to make peace on the terms proposed, that on the very morning of the day on which the last meeting of the congress took place, he wrote to him as follows : "The day when peace may be finally concluded, under the necessary sacrifices, has at length arrived ;—come to conclude it, but without attempting inadmissible projects. Matters have now come to such a pass, that you can no longer write romances without the greatest risks to the Emperor Napoleon. What risks, on the other hand, do the Allies run ? None but being obliged to evacuate the territory of old France ; and what would that avail the Emperor Napoleon ? The whole left bank of the Rhine will speedily be raised against him : Savoy is in arms : attacks entirely personal will soon be made on the Emperor, without the possibility of arresting them. I speak to you with sincerity ; I am ever on the same path. You know my views, my principles, my wishes. The first are entirely European, and therefore not alien to France ; the second point to retaining Austria interested in the well-being of France ; the third are in favour of a dynasty so intimately united to our own. I speak to you, my dear duke, in the most entire confidence. To put an end to the dangers which menace France, it depends only on your master to make peace. Matters, if he does not do so, will ere long be beyond his reach. The throne of Louis XIV. with the additions of Louis XV. is too high a stake to put upon a single throw. I will do my utmost to retain Lord Castlereagh a few days : the moment he is gone, all hope of peace has vanished." Caulaincourt replied on the 20th,—"If it depended on me, your hopes would speedily be realised ; I should have no doubt they would, if I was sure that yourself and Lord Castlereagh were the instruments of that work, as glorious as it is desir-

able." It was all in vain : Napoleon positively refused to recede from his counter-project, and the allied plenipotentiaries left Châtillon. Like a rock projecting far into the stormy main, he stood alone, firm and immovable, while the waves were beating around him.*

116. Thus was finally dissolved the famous congress of Châtillon ; thus departed the last chance which Napoleon had of preserving his revolutionary dynasty on the throne of France. Caulaincourt next day delivered an answer to the note of the allied sovereigns : it contained nothing but a repetition of the arguments he had formerly urged, but without abating in any degree the pretensions which France had advanced ; and the congress was declared terminated. It broke off from no verbal distinctions or diplomatic casuistry. Real substantial interests were involved in the matters at issue ; it was the life or death of the French supremacy in Europe which was at stake. With Flanders and the Rhenish provinces remaining part of the French empire ; with the kingdom of Italy and the Elector of Saxony for external dependents ; with one hand resting on Antwerp and another on Mantua, and a ready ingress at all times prepared into the heart of Germany through Mayence,—the revolutionary dynasty, impelled alike by internal discontent and external ambition, would never have ceased to disturb the peace of Europe. But of all these great keys to European dominion, it was Antwerp to which the Emperor most strongly held ; it was the dread of losing it which made him, with fifty thousand men, renew a contest with two hundred thousand, almost at the gates of Paris. "Antwerp," says Napoleon, "was to me a province in itself ; it was the principal cause of my exile to St Helena ; for it was

"But, like a rock unmoved, a rock that
braves
The raging tempest and the rising waves—
Propp'd on himself he stands : his solid sides
Wash off the sea-weeds, and the sounding
tides—
So stood the pious prince unmoved, and
long
Sustain'd the madness of the noisy throng."
Æsop, book vii.

the required cession of that fortress which made me refuse the terms offered at Châtillon. If they would have left it to me, peace would have been concluded." Strange, that within twenty years of the time when this great man had preferred risking the crown of France to the surrender of that outwork against England, and in the full knowledge of his opinion as to its importance for their overthrow, the British government, in a paroxysm of political madness, should have lent the aid of their fleet to the French army to wrest that noble fortress from their natural allies the Dutch, and restore it to a revolutionary dynasty and the rule of the tricolor flag!*

117. Napoleon's conduct at this crisis was strikingly characteristic of the indomitable firmness of his mind, and of that mixture of confidence in his powers and unbending rigidity of disposition, which had so long contributed to his elevation. On all sides his empire was crumbling around him. Above a third of France had been wrested from him by the Allies, with-

* So intent was Napoleon on the preservation of Antwerp, that on the 17th March, the very day before the ultimatum of the Allies was delivered, declining the proposals of France, Maret, by his orders, wrote from Rheims:—"The abandonment of all their conquests by the English is a real concession which his Majesty approves, *especially if it can be combined with leaving us Antwerp*. If the negotiation is to be broken off, it is expedient that it should be on the cession of our strongholds, and the evacuation of our territory. If you are obliged to abandon Antwerp, the Emperor requires that you shall insist on the restitution of all our colonies, including the Isle of France, and the adherence to the basis of Frankfort so far as regards Italy."—MARET to CAULAINCOURT, Rheims, 17th March 1814; FAIX, 307, 308. This letter did not reach Caulaincourt till the congress was dissolved.

out firing a shot; Holland and Flanders were lost, Spain had been torn from his grasp, and Soult, driven from the Pyrenees, was hardly able to defend the line of the Garonne from the victorious arms of the English and Spaniards. Surrounded by a host of enemies, the most formidable and inveterate which Europe had ever seen, France was reduced to its ancient and narrow limits, when Laon was its frontier, the Garonne its barrier stream, before Philip Augustus and Louis XI. extended its frontiers to the Rhine and the Pyrenees. Napoleon was at the head only of a gallant army of eighty thousand men in the east of France, and fifty thousand in Languedoc, when four hundred thousand effective soldiers were assembled in the heart of France to beat him to the ground. Yet in this desperate situation he abated nothing of his haughty bearing; broke off the congress of Châtillon, rather than surrender Antwerp and Mantua; retained seventy thousand of his best troops in the garrisons of Spain and Germany, to preserve the means of renewing his conquests; and voluntarily risked dethronement, rather than purchase peace by the reduction of his empire to the limits which had satisfied the ambition of Louis XIV. He preferred risking all, in his own words, "to sitting down with a diminished empire, and on a dishonoured throne."

"Et qui règne un moment, aime à regner toujours :
Mais si l'essai du trône en fait durer l'envie
Dans l'âme la plus haute à l'égal de la vie,
Un roi né pour la gloire, et digne de son sort,
A la honte des fers sait préférer la mort."
CORNEILLE.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

FALL OF NAPOLEON.

1. In the midst of the general wreck of his empire, it was on Paris, the seat of his power, and the centre of all his political ramifications, that the attention of the Emperor was fixed. The accounts from that capital were sufficiently alarming. Slowly indeed, but perceptibly, and at last in an alarming manner, the vast hosts of the Grand Army were approaching. The long diversion produced by Blücher's irruption towards Meaux, had in a manner left the road to Paris open to Schwartzemberg. Macdonald and Oudinot, since their defeat at Bar-sur-Aube, were hardly a match for a single corps of the allied army; Troyes had been re-occupied; the passage of the Seine had been forced at Nogent; their light cavalry again appeared at Fontainebleau and Nemours; and the whole body of their forces might be at Paris on the 20th. The near approach of such formidable masses, the absence of Napoleon, the issue of the battles of Craone and Laon, the fall of Lyons, the occupation of Bordeaux, and proclamation of Louis XVIII. there, had both excited unbounded consternation among the imperial functionaries, and awakened enthusiastic hopes among the Royalist party. Their committees were in motion in all the provinces; Paris itself was no stranger to their movements; many of the strongest heads there regarded the restoration of the Bourbons as the only means of extricating France from the abyss into which it had fallen; many more of the basest hearts looked to it as the securest means of preserving, amidst the ruin of their country, their individual fortunes. Talleyrand, the Abbé de Pradt, the Duke of Dalberg, M. de Jaucourt,

were in secret correspondence with the allied headquarters; and M. de Vitrolles had communicated to the Emperor Alexander the feeling entertained at Paris on the necessity of a restoration. Alarmed at the dangers which were accumulating on all sides, Prince Joseph urged the Empress to write secretly to her father; but she refused to do so without the knowledge of the Emperor. Consternation or hope was painted in every visage; a restless disquietude kept the people in the streets; and that general quiver in thought was perceptible, which is the invariable precursor of revolution.

2. Amidst so many dangers which pressed on all sides, it was against the army of Schwartzemberg that the Emperor deemed it first expedient to march; for its columns, if not arrested, might be in Paris in three days. To guard against the danger of a surprise by the light troops of Blücher, while he himself was engaged in combating the Grand Army, he despatched on the 16th secret orders to Joseph, to send off the Empress and King of Rome to the other side of the Loire, in the event of Paris being threatened. Having taken this precaution, he, on the day following, left Marmont and Mortier with twenty thousand men, of whom five thousand were cavalry, and sixty pieces of cannon, to make head against Blücher on the Aisne, with instructions to retard his advance as much as possible, and fall back, always drawing nearer to him, towards Paris. Meanwhile, he himself set out with the remainder of his army, about twenty-six thousand strong, (including seven thousand on their road from Paris under Lefebvre-Desnouettes), of which

seven thousand were cavalry, to join Macdonald and Oudinot, and drive back the Grand Army on the banks of the Seine. These marshals had thirty-five thousand under their orders, of whom ten thousand were cavalry; so that to attack Schwartzberg, who had above a hundred thousand combatants under his command, Napoleon had only sixty thousand men, of whom seventeen thousand were horse. On the Aisne the disproportion was still greater; for there Blücher, with above a hundred thousand, was opposed only by Marmont and Mortier with twenty thousand,—in all, eighty thousand against two hundred thousand: a fearful disproportion, especially when the long course of previous victories and admirable quality of the allied troops were considered. Yet was it not so decisive as to relieve the generals from serious anxiety, when the central position of Napoleon was taken into account, the devoted valour of his followers, the secrecy and force of the blows which he dealt out in all directions, the resources which he could command in his own dominions, and their own distance from their reserves, their parks of ammunition, and supplies of provisions.

3. The French troops rested the first night at Eprenay: the inhabitants emptied their cellars to refresh their defenders; and for a few hours the delicious wines of Champagne made the soldiers forget their fatigues, the officers their anxieties. On the 18th the march continued towards the Aube, and the army slept at Fère-Champenoise. Napoleon there received intelligence of the state of the negotiations at Châtillon; and the great probability that on that very day Caulaincourt's counter-project had been rejected, and the congress broken up. Nothing disconcerted by this intelligence, which cut off his last hope of an accommodation, the Emperor held on his route, hoping to fall on the communications and rear of Schwartzberg's army, which, loosely extended over a vast front nearly eighty miles in breadth, from Fère-Champenoise to Sens, promised to present some of its corps, isolated from the rest, to

his strokes. Intelligence of the approach of the French Emperor was soon conveyed to the allied generals by the admirable horsemen who formed the eyes of their army; but it was long before they would give any credit to the intelligence, deeming him fully occupied, or closely followed, by Blücher. At length, on the evening of the 18th, the accounts of the approach of large bodies having the ensigns of the Imperial Guard among them, were so alarming that the Emperor Alexander, accompanied by Prince Volkonsky, came up with all imaginable haste from Troyes to Arcis, where Schwartzberg lay confined to bed by the gout. Meeting General Toll, the quartermaster-general, in the antechamber, Alexander said with warmth—"What are you about here? we may lose the whole army." "It is a great blessing," replied Toll, "your Majesty has come, we could not persuade the generals of that; but now you will set all to rights." By Alexander's command orders were instantly despatched in all directions for the army to concentrate between Troyes and Pogny; Wrede's corps being left in the night to keep possession of Arcis, and the bridge over the Aube, with all his troops.

4. Had Napoleon been at the head of a large force, or even been aware, with the troops he actually had, of the disjointed state of the allied army, and the panic which prevailed at headquarters, he might possibly, by pursuing his march direct on Arcis, have routed Wrede, and fallen headlong, by the great road to Troyes, into the very centre of the allied army. In the critical state of the negotiations at Châtillon, and the known timidity of the Austrian councils, the effect of such a success might have been incalculable. Ignorant, however, of the prize almost within his grasp, or deeming himself not strong enough to snatch it, Napoleon, instead of descending the course of the Aube, and moving direct on Arcis, turned aside to his right to Plancy, in order to effect a junction with Macdonald and Oudinot, who had received orders to meet him near that place, having marched that morning

from Provins. They met, accordingly, and the light cavalry passed the Aube, crossed the Seine at Mery, traversed the yet smouldering ruins of that town, and at Chatres regained the great road from Troyes to Paris. Napoleon was now at the head of fifty-five thousand men, and prepared, when Lefebvre-Desnouettes came up, with seven thousand more, to give battle. But the surprise was over; his plan of attack was seen; the allied corps were rapidly concentrating; and Schwartzberg, ably repairing his former error of undue extension, had stopped the retreat, and given orders to the troops to unite in advance, between Arcis and Plancy, and attack the enemy during his passage of the Aube. By this vigorous and well-timed change of operations, the initiative was taken from Napoleon and gained by the allied generals; the concentration of their army was effected in advance instead of retreat; and they were put in a condition at once to bring the enemy to a general battle, with every advantage on their side arising from a decisive superiority of numbers.

5. Napoleon was not prepared for this sudden resumption of the offensive by the Austrian general. He had expected, from the information communicated by Macdonald and Oudinot, to have found the enemy at the gates of Paris; and well knowing the Austrian nervousness about being turned, he had calculated, not without reason, on arresting them by falling on their communications. Now, however, the stroke had failed: the turn to the right at Plancy had given them time to concentrate their army, and all hope of reaching their rear was postponed, if not lost. Persuaded, however, that it was by such a manœuvre only that their enormous masses could be forced back, the Emperor still clung to the idea of turning their right; and therefore he resolved to push forward his left, remount the course of the Aube by Arcis, as far, if necessary, as Barsur-Aube, and thus threaten Chaumont and their communications with the Rhine. On the 20th, accordingly, the whole army marched by the right bank of the Aube, up the stream, till

they came opposite to Arcis at ten o'clock.

6. That town was immediately occupied; and Napoleon, coming up at one o'clock in the afternoon, held a council of war with his principal marshals and generals as to the course which should be pursued. The report of the inhabitants was unanimous that the retrograde movement of the Allies had been arrested; that Schwartzberg, with the greater part of his forces, was within a few miles, screened only by the intervening hills; and that before two hours had elapsed Arcis would be attacked on all sides by their columns. Napoleon, conceiving it impossible that the Austrian generalissimo could have adopted so able and vigorous a resolution as that of suddenly stopping his retreat, and converging with all his force to the decisive point, persisted in maintaining that they were in full retreat; and that the troops before him were only a rear-guard; he summoned up accordingly all his troops, crossed them over the Aube at Arcis, and gave orders to continue the pursuit with the utmost vigour on the road to Troyes. He was only convinced of his mistake when, on the firing of three guns from a short distance in the rear of the enemy's cavalry, the heads of his columns, converging on all sides towards Arcis, suddenly appeared on the summit of the swelling hills lying on the westward of the town.

7. In effect, Schwartzberg's dispositions had now brought the whole Grand Army upon Napoleon; and the movement of the latter upon Arcis, instead of directing his forces upon the flanks and rear of a retreating and disjointed host, as he expected, had placed him immediately against the front of a superior and concentrated advancing one. The Prince-Royal of Würtemberg, Raefskoi, and Giulay had marched at daybreak from Troyes upon Plancy, while Wrede again occupied Arcis, and the Guards and reserve came up to Onjon. At ten o'clock Wrede's advanced guard, agreeably to orders, evacuated that town, and retired towards the south by the road

of Troyes; and this retrograde movement it was which made Napoleon conceive that he had only a slender rear-guard before him. Meanwhile Alexander and the King of Prussia arrived on the heights of M  nil-la-Comtesse, where the Russian Guards were posted; and the former, immediately dismounting, walked backwards and forwards with Barclay de Tolly. "These gentlemen," said the Emperor, looking to the Austrian generals, "have made my head half grey. Napoleon will amuse us here with insignificant movements, and meanwhile march the main body of his forces on Brienne, and fall on our communications." His anxiety the preceding two nights had been excessive, and he had rightly divined the French Emperor's intentions; but the digression of the latter to Plancy had given Schwartzberg time to concentrate, and a vigorous offensive was about to terminate the long irresolution of the Austrian councils.

8. The battle commenced by a skirmish on the outposts between the cavalry of the Allies under Kaisaroff and that of the French led by Sebastiani. Gradually several batteries of horse-artillery were brought up on both sides, fresh squadrons advanced to the support of either party, and in the end a serious cavalry action took place. The French horsemen, though inferior to none in the world in audacity and prowess, were over-matched in number by their opponents, and driven back in great confusion to the bridge of Arcis. Napoleon, who was on the other side, instantly rode forward to the entrance of the bridge, already all but choked up with fugitives, and, drawing his sword, exclaimed, "Let me see which of you will pass before me." These words arrested the flight; and at the same time the division Friant passed the bridge, traversed the streets of Arcis in double quick time, formed at its other extremity, and by their heavy fire drove back the allied horse. Meanwhile a bloody combat had commenced on the French left between Wrede and Ney; the former endeavouring

to storm, the latter to defend, the village of Torcy. An Austrian battalion, in the first instance, made itself master of that important post, which would have opened to the allied right under Wrede the direct road to Arcis; but Ney's men speedily drove them out. Wrede again retook it with three battalions; but Napoleon immediately brought up a body of his Guards, which a second time regained it, and maintained their post until nightfall, despite the utmost efforts of the Bavarians and Austrians.

9. The position of the French was now extremely strong, and well calculated to counterbalance the superiority of numbers which the Allies enjoyed. Their army occupied a semicircular position facing outwards, with each flank resting on the river Aube, so as to be secure against being turned; while in their rear was the town of Arcis, which would form a secure place of defence in case of disaster. The Allies formed a much larger concave semicircle facing inwards—Wrede being on the right; the Russian reserves and Guards, under Barclay, in the centre; Raefskoi, who had now joined, and Giulay on the left. If the whole left had been able to get up in time to take a part in the action around Arcis, the battle would have been as general, and possibly as decisive, as that of Leipsic, to which, as regarded the respective positions of the French and Allies, it bore a very close resemblance. But the corps of the Prince-Royal of W  rtemberg was absent on the side of Plancy, opposed to Mortier, where it was engaged only in an inconsiderable skirmish, which terminated in the capture on his part of a few pontoons. Thus nearly a third of the allied army was absent till the very close of the day. Napoleon took advantage of that circumstance to maintain his position before Arcis till nightfall, and seventy guns, placed in front of his right, ploughed with fearful effect through the squadrons of the Allies. As soon, however, as the Prince-Royal of W  rtemberg approached, Schwartzberg ordered the Guards and reserve to advance; the

cannon were all hurried to the front, and a general attack commenced. As the Russian batteries of the Guard passed the Emperor at full speed, he bade them remember Leipsic; and soon the thunder of their guns was heard above the loudest roar of the combat. The sun was now setting, darkness was stealing over the heavens, Arcis and Torcy were wrapped in flames, the Russian horse-artillery on the allied left reduced the French cannon to silence, and their long array of guns, advancing to the front of the semicircle of heights which surround the town, played with terrible effect on the dense columns of the French which encircled its walls. The Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia now descended from the heights of Ménil-la-Comtesse, and followed the reserves into action: behind them came a brigade of the Prussian, and the Red Cossacks of the Russian Guard, making the air resound with their trumpets and the war-songs of the desert.

10. On the side of the French the scene was as mournful as on the allied it was animating. Motionless, but undaunted, the troops stood under the terrible cannonade; with the instinct of discipline the ranks closed up as fast as chasms were made; the officers exposed themselves like the privates, the generals as the officers. Napoleon was repeatedly in imminent danger, both from the charges of cavalry and fire of artillery; many of his staff were killed or wounded: a bomb fell at his side, he calmly waited its explosion, which covered him with smoke and dust, and wounded his horse; he mounted another and maintained his position. "Fear nothing," said he to the generals, who urged him to retire; "the bullet is not yet cast which is to kill me." He seemed to court rather than to shrink from death; his air was resolute, but sombre; and as long as the battle raged, by the light of the burning houses behind, and the flash of the enemy's guns in front, he continued with undaunted resolution to face the hostile batteries. This dreadful cannonade continued till ten at

night, when it died away from mutual exhaustion, and a nocturnal irruption by Sebastiani on Kaisaroff, which was repulsed, terminated the day.

11. Both parties slept on the field of battle, and neither could claim any decided advantage; for if, on the one hand, the French had been stopped in their advance, and thrown back on the defensive around the walls of Arcis; on the other, the Allies, though decidedly superior in number, had not been able to force their position there, or drive them over the Aube. On the side of the Allies, great efforts were made to bring up all their remote detachments, and concentrate their army; and a general and decisive battle, on the succeeding day, was universally anticipated. At daybreak the whole army was in line, and stood in the following order:—Wrede was at Chaudre, in front of the blood-stained ruins of Torcy; the hereditary Prince of Würtemberg at the hamlet of Ménil, Giulay on his left, and then Raefskoi with his Russians. The grenadiers and cuirassiers were in the second line, behind the centre, at Ménil-la-Comtesse. On the side of Napoleon, the troops stood on the same ground, in a semicircle around Arcis, which they had occupied on the preceding day, without any addition; for though Macdonald and Oudinot had come up during the night, yet their forces, now raised to nearly thirty thousand strong, were still stationed on the opposite side of the river.

12. It was an awful and yet animating sight when the rising sun glittered on the low swelling hills which surrounded the town of Arcis. A hundred and fifty thousand men on the two sides, trained to the most perfect discipline, but animated by burning passions, were drawn up, gazing at each other, at a very short distance, without moving from the spot on which they were placed. The soldiers stood at ease, but with their muskets at their shoulders: the cavalry were for the most part dismounted, but every bridle was over the horseman's arm; the slow matches were burning at the guns in front of the lines; a word

from either commander would at once have let slip the dogs of war, and roused a dreadful combat. Yet not a sound was to be heard, scarcely a movement seen, in either army. Motionless, yet ever in perfect array, the vast masses stood fronting each other; not a gun was fired, not a voice was raised; it seemed as if both hosts, impressed with the solemnity of the moment which was to decide the conflict of twenty years, were too deeply affected to disturb the stillness of the scene. But hour after hour passed away without any movement being attempted on either side, until the long suspense had made the very hearts of the soldiers to ache, and their spirit to sink within them at danger long fronted, hope long deferred.* At one time a large part of Macdonald's corps was brought across, and there seemed every appearance of the action commencing; but that was only a feint: a second bridge had meanwhile been thrown over the Aube; and at one in the afternoon the equipages were seen defiling to the rear, and decided symptoms of a retreat were manifested. No movement could be conceived more hazardous in presence of nearly a hundred thousand men, ready to fall on and crush the rear-guard after half the army had passed. Such was the respect, however, inspired by the very name of Napoleon, and the imposing array which his forces made around Arcis, that it was not till three o'clock that Schwartzenberg gave the signal for attack.

13. The troops on all sides immediately advanced, preceded by a hundred pieces of cannon, which opened their fire at the same instant. Pahlen attacked on the right, Raefskoi in the centre; and soon the advancing batteries approached so near, that their balls crossed each other in all direc-

* The great road from Arcis-sur-Aube to Chaumont passes through the centre of the allied position, in the winding sweep which it makes to surmount the heights that bound the valley of the Aube to the south-west of the town. Of the innumerable travellers who pass over the field, how few think of the memorable scene decisive of the fate of Napoleon and the Revolution of which it was the theatre!—*Personal observation.*

tions over the town; bombs fell in all the streets and on both the bridges, and many houses took fire. If the Austrian general had advanced two hours earlier to the attack, it must have been a repetition of the triumph which, in a similar situation at Friedland [*ante*, Chap. XLVI. § 56], Napoleon had gained over an army of Russians of much the same strength as that he himself now commanded.† But the attack had been deferred too late for decisive success: a large part of the French army had passed over before the combat became serious; and the rear-guard under Macdonald maintained so gallant a resistance, that it was dark before the allied troops approached Arcis. Prince Eugene of Würtemberg's men at length drove back Oudinot, and broke into the town close after the French rear-guard, which rushed towards the bridges; their cavalry crossed at a ford; the bridge was blown up; a desperate conflict took place in the streets; and numbers were drowned in trying to swim across after the arch was cut away. During the whole night, however, the French kept up so heavy a cannonade from the opposite bank, that all attempts to restore it proved ineffectual; and before morning dawned, Napoleon was far advanced on the road to Vitry, leaving only a powerful rear-guard in front of Arcis to retard the passage of the river.‡

14. Though the battle of Arcis-sur-Aube was not attended with any brilliant trophies taken in the field, yet it was followed by decisive effects on the fortunes of Napoleon. The loss of the French was about four thousand men, of whom eight hundred were prisoners, and six pieces of cannon; that of the Allies was as great. But its immediate result was to throw Napoleon upon the eccentric line of ope-

† The relative strength of the French and Russians at Friedland was almost exactly the same as that of the Allies and French at Arcis; the French had eighty thousand, and the Russians fifty thousand.

‡ On leaving Arcis, Napoleon sent two thousand francs from his private purse to the *Sœurs de la Charité*, by the Count de Turenne, to assuage the sufferings of the wounded.—FAIN, 182, note.

rations which immediately led to his fall. His meditated project of falling upon the rear and communications of the Grand Army had wholly failed: his cross-march to Plancy had given them time to concentrate, and he had been repulsed in the attempt to penetrate by main force into the allied lines. It had been completely proved that his strength was unequal to hurdling against their immense masses when drawn together. Nothing remained but still to threaten their communications; to draw near to the garrisons of the frontier, from which those supplies of veteran troops could be obtained which were no longer to be found in the heart of France, and to further the efforts of the insurgent bodies of peasantry, who, inflamed by a patriotic spirit, and irritated by the pillage of the allied troops, were waiting only the signal of his advance to commence a murderous guerilla warfare on their flanks and rear. To do this, however, required an immense sacrifice—it was necessary to march direct towards the Rhine, and abandon the defence of Paris; for the Emperor's army was so sorely reduced in numbers, that to divide was to destroy it. Moreover, the success of the measure depended entirely on the formation, by the aid of the disengaged garrisons, of such an imposing force on the enemy's communications as would command attention, and entirely withdraw them from any movement on the capital. Impressed with these ideas, on which he had long meditated, and which, situated as he was, were unquestionably well founded, Napoleon, on leaving Arcis, instead of taking the road either to Chalons, from whence he had come, or to Paris, by which it was expected he would retire, moved on the chaussée of Vitry direct towards the Rhine.*

* "I marched on St Dizier," said Napoleon afterwards at Elba, to General Kohler, the Austrian commissioner, "because twenty experiments had convinced me that I had only to send a few hussars on your line of communication, in order to spread dismay amongst you. On this occasion I stood on it with my whole army, but you never troubled your heads about me; 'twas because the devil had possession of you."—DANILEFSKY, 279.

15. The Emperor's first day's march was to the environs of Vitry. Ney was sent up to the walls of the town to summon it to surrender, threatening at the same time to put the whole garrison, in the event of resistance, to the sword. After some hesitation, however, the governor, who was at the head of a garrison of five thousand men, and forty pieces of cannon, resolved to stand the hazard of an assault, and manfully held out. This check, which Napoleon had not anticipated, disarranged his plans; for he was in no condition either to batter its walls or attempt an escalade. Turning aside, therefore, from this unprofitable attempt, he next day continued his march, and reached St Dizier, where headquarters were established for the night. He was there joined by Caulaincourt, with intelligence of the dissolution of the congress of Châtillon. This portentous event, combined with the hopelessness of the war, and seeming extravagance of the march towards the Rhine, completed the discouragement of the generals and officers.

16. They saw no end to the campaign, no fruit for their toils or their blood. Instead of defending Paris, they were marching towards Germany: the capital of their country, their homes, their hearths, would become the prey of the enemy; while all that was dear to them was lost, they were plunging anew into an endless warfare, to which they could see neither an issue nor an object. A revolution was openly spoken of, even at headquarters, as a possible, perhaps a probable contingency; the obstinacy which had refused the terms offered by the Allies was universally condemned; many doubted the Emperor's sanity of mind. "Where is this to end? Whither are we marching? If he falls, shall we fall with him?" was universally asked. Disregarding these murmurs and discontents, with the existence of which he was only partially acquainted, Napoleon spread out his wings on either side from St Dizier to Bar-sur-Aube, headquarters being established at Doulevant; and the

light cavalry having got on the great road to Langres, in the rear of the Allies, and on their principal line of communication, entered Chaumont, captured a pontoon train and a considerable quantity of baggage and ammunition, and spread terror from Troyes to Vesoul.

17. Great was the astonishment in the allied army when they beheld the French columns retreating, not towards the capital, but the Rhine. A Cossack who first brought in the intelligence, was so confounded that he said, "The enemy is retreating, not on Paris, but on Moscow." It soon, however, became evident that the French line of march was decidedly taken; and Schwartzberg, suspecting it was a feint, and desirous at all events to be near the enemy and keep his own troops together, crossed the greater part of his army over at Arcis, and the adjacent fords, leaving Giulay alone, with the rear-guard, to retain possession of the bridge. On the day following his troops continued to pursue the enemy's rear-guard; and some squadrons of cavalry having succeeded in routing a detachment of French horse at Sommepeux, which guarded a park of guns, the pieces, in number three-and-twenty, were taken, and four hundred prisoners. But what was of far more importance, despatches from Napoleon's headquarters were intercepted, which left no doubt of his design of moving on St Dizier, and falling on the communications of the Grand Army. On these letters being taken, they were straightway forwarded to Prince

Schwartzberg, who deemed them of such importance, that he immediately had them forwarded to the Emperor Alexander at Pogny. They proved to be a secret despatch from Savary, giving the most deplorable account, both of the total exhaustion of resources and the shaken state of the public mind at Paris, and a private letter from Napoleon to Marie Louise, announcing his intended movement on St Dizier, and design to draw near to the strong places on the frontier.*

18. These important letters reached Alexander at Dampierre at one o'clock in the morning. They had hardly been read over, when despatches arrived from Count Pahlen, with intelligence of his having, on the road from Arcis to Chalons, fallen in with Chernicheff at the head of Blucher's advanced guard; and that the army of Silesia had advanced from Laon to Rheims and Epernay, and occupied Chalons. Thus at the very moment that Napoleon had withdrawn from the protection of Paris, and marched towards the Rhine, the heads of Schwartzberg's and Blucher's armies had effected a junction in his rear, and a hundred and eighty thousand men stood between him and the capital! Accounts at the same time arrived of the occupation of Bordeaux by the British troops, and the proclamation of Louis XVIII., with the general concurrence of the inhabitants. This extraordinary combination of important events led the Emperor Alexander, who had come on to Sommepeux, musing on them by the way, to call in Prince Volkonsky,

* Napoleon's letter to the Empress Marie Louise was in these terms:—"My love! I have been for some days constantly on horseback; on the 20th I took Arcis-sur-Aube. The enemy attacked me there at eight o'clock in the evening; I beat him the same evening; I took two guns, and retook two. The next day the enemy's army put itself in battle array to protect the march of its columns on Brienne and Bar-sur-Aube; and I resolved to approach the Marne, and its environs, in order to drive them further from Paris, by approaching my own fortified places. This evening I shall be at St Dizier. Farewell, my love! Embrace my son!"—BURGHESSE'S *Operations of the Allied Army in France*, 339, No. 14; and DANILEFSKY, 285. It is remarkable that the important despatches

which announced to Hannibal the arrival of Hasdrubal in Italy, and led to the march of the consul Nero, and decisive victory of the Metaurus, were in like manner intercepted by the Roman light horse. "Hasdrubal's horsemen," says Arnold, "fell in with some foragers of the army of Quintus Claudius, and were made prisoners. The Prætor instantly sent them under a strong escort to Nero. They were the bearers of a letter from Hasdrubal to his brother, containing the whole plan of their future operations. It was written not in cipher, but in the common Carthaginian language and character; and the interpreter read its contents in Latin to the consul. Nero took his resolution on the instant."—LIVY, xxvii. 43; ARNOLD, iii. 367.

Count Barclay, and Generals Diebitch and Toll, who all took part in the memorable council which followed. Alexander, adhering to the opinion which he had all along maintained, that the real object of the war was to destroy the military power of Napoleon, at first stated that he thought the most advisable course would be to unite with Blücher at Vitry, pursue the French Emperor, and attack him wherever they should find him. "We have to choose, however, between that," he added, "and, concealing our movements from him, to march straight to Paris. What is your opinion, gentlemen?" turning to Barclay de Tolly. "We had better," said the field-marshal, after looking at the map, "follow Napoleon and attack him." All agreed in this opinion, coming as it did from the first in rank and the first in reputation, except Diebitch and Volkonsky. The former said that it would be more advisable, in his opinion, while the united armies were following Napoleon, for Bulow, who was lying at Soissons, to make a dash at Paris. To this Volkonsky replied in these memorable words:—

19. "It is well known that there are at Paris forty thousand national guards and fragments of regiments; and, in addition to these, at a short distance from the capital, are the two corps of Marmont and Mortier. Their united force will be at least seventy thousand strong; consequently we cannot expect that Bulow, with his thirty thousand, could effect anything of importance; on the contrary, he would expose himself to danger by attacking an enemy so greatly superior to him in numbers. On the other hand, if we follow Napoleon, we must leave a considerable rear-guard to ward off the attack of these two marshals. In these circumstances, I am of opinion that it would be advisable first to unite with the Silesian army, and then to detach against Napoleon a numerous body of cavalry and some regiments of infantry, with instructions everywhere to prepare accommodation for the Emperor, that it may be believed we are following with the whole army. We

ought then to march straight to Paris through Fère-Champenoise, and Blücher through Etoges, keeping up an uninterrupted communication between the two armies. Following this route, we must attack Marshals Marmont and Mortier wherever we meet them. But we shall beat them, because we are stronger than they; and each day will place two marches between us and Napoleon." Alexander warmly approved this advice, which coincided entirely with the spirit of the vigorous councils he had always supported. "If it is your Majesty's intention," said Diebitch, "to re-establish the Bourbons, it would certainly be better to march with both armies to Paris." "We are not now talking of the Bourbons," replied Alexander, "but of pulling down Napoleon." It was then calculated how long it would take to reach Paris; and it was found it would be possible to assemble both armies, take possession of the capital, and destroy Napoleon's power there, before he could get back to its relief, if he should attempt to regain it. The plan was then unanimously agreed to by all present; but the Emperor, before finally adopting it, expressed a wish to communicate it to the King of Prussia and Prince Schwartzberg, and for that purpose mounted his horse and rode off towards Vitry, accompanied by General Toll.

20. It was on the high-road from Sommepeuis to Vitry, five miles from the former place, that the Emperor met the King of Prussia and Prince Schwartzberg, who were on their way to him. They all immediately dismounted, and ascending a knoll on the roadside, from whence Vitry and the whole adjacent plain were in view, the Emperor desired General Toll to unroll the map on the grass, and, leaning over it, explained Volkonsky's views, which he had now adopted as his own. The King and the Prince at once assented to the plan: the former observing that it entirely coincided with his own wishes; the latter, that he would indeed in this way lose his magazines at Chaumont, and would suffer for some time from the interruption of his com-

munications ; but that this evil, such as it was, had been already incurred, and that the proposed change of operations should meet with his cordial support. This was at eleven o'clock in the morning of the 24th of March, on a height within sight of Vitry, whither the troops were seen marching on all sides, over fields just beginning to put forth the first colours of restored nature. The sun shone with unclouded brilliancy ; a balmy freshness, succeeding to the long and dreary frost which had preceded it, softened the air ; all nature seemed to be reviving under the breath of spring. Alexander, pointing in the direction of the capital, said aloud, "Let us all march to PARIS."

These words were the DEATH-WARRANT OF THE REVOLUTION, twenty-five years after it had first begun by the convocation of the States-General, in March 1789 ; and exactly that day one year and nine months since, on the 24th June 1812, Napoleon, at the head of five hundred thousand men, had beheld, in the pride of apparently irresistible strength, his superb army cross the Niemen to invade the Russian territories. The intercepting of a letter, and the omission to write it in cipher, were the immediate cause of the ruin of Napoleon, as they had been of Hannibal, and determined the contest between France and England, as they had done that between Rome and Carthage.

21. Although the resolution to march on Paris was thus formally adopted, it required some time before the necessary orders could be prepared, and a change of direction communicated to a hundred and eighty thousand men, who, over an extent of above seventy miles in breadth, overspread the plains of Champagne. Alexander and Schwartzenberg, with the King of Prussia, rode on to Vitry, where headquarters were established for the remainder of the day, and couriers were sent off in all directions with the requisite instructions to the commanders

of corps. Shortly after the Emperor had taken up his quarters at Vitry, Chernicheff arrived with Blucher's advanced guard, and, being immediately admitted to the Emperor, earnestly enforced the propriety of an immediate advance to Paris. "Ask Volkonsky," replied Alexander, smiling, "what resolution we came to only half an hour ago." Meanwhile the whole corps of the Grand Army were grouped around Vitry, with the exception of Giulay, who still remained in guard of the bridge of Arcis. The following orders were then issued. At daybreak on the next morning, the Grand Army was to march direct by the high-road through Fère-Champenoise to Meaux ; while the Silesian army was to advance to the same place from Chalons. The united armies were to advance direct from Meaux upon the capital, which it was expected they would reach by the 29th.

22. Meanwhile a column of eight thousand horse, with forty-six pieces of horse-artillery, under Winzingerode, were sent in the direction of St Dizier after Napoleon. His instructions were to detach Chernicheff with a large body of Cossacks to the right, towards Montiérender, to observe the country between the Marne and the Aube ; and Tettenborn to the left towards Metz, to observe whether Napoleon was making any movement in the direction of that fortress. His grand object was to be to conceal the movements of the Allies from the French, and to give his own headquarters accurate information of the direction of Napoleon. The better to conceal what was going forward, Winzingerode received instructions everywhere to give orders for the reception of the Emperor of Russia. Flying detachments were at the same time sent out ; Kaisaroff and Sislavin to scour the country, the former to the southward, in the direction of Brienne and Montiérender, the latter in that of Montmirail and Montereau, in order, if possible, to prevent any communication passing between Paris and the French Emperor. All the troops were directed to march in fighting order, all the bat-

* The spot where these words were spoken may be seen on a little knoll on the right of the road from Sommepeux to Vitry.—*Personal observation.*

talions being in columns of attack. At three in the afternoon, Winzingerode, with his numerous corps of cavalry, marched out of Vitry towards St Dizier; all became quiet in the former town, where the Emperor Alexander's headquarters alone remained, and soon the sky was illuminated by the blaze of innumerable bivouacs along the banks of the Marne, where the rude warriors of the East reposed around their humble watchfires.

23. No words can convey an idea of the enthusiasm which prevailed throughout the whole allied army when, at daybreak on the 25th, it became evident, from the routes assigned to the different corps, that a general march on Paris had been resolved on. The joyful news spread from rank to rank; the transports of the soldiers rose to the highest pitch. By a natural transition, the minds of the Russians reverted to the days of their own humiliation—to the disastrous day when, at the close of their long-continued retreat, they had, with bursting hearts, abandoned their capital to the invader. The staff-officers who now wrote the march-routes for the troops were the same as those who, in 1812, when Moscow was relinquished, had framed the instructions for the army when it marched out by the Riazan road. The same hands which had then written Bogorodsk, Kassimoff, Serpukoff, and Podolsk, now put down Etoges, Epernay, Fère-Champenoise, and Vertus. An age seemed to have separated the two periods, yet were they only distant eighteen months! The Russian veterans, with the medal of 1812 on their bosoms, reverted to the dreadful war of that year; they remembered the ghastly horrors of the field of Borodino, the circular night march round Moscow by the light of its flames; and mingled with the exultation, shared with them by their younger comrades, a deeper spirit of thankfulness for the marvellous protection afforded by Providence to their country.

24. Although serious disasters might have been expected from the irruption of Napoleon with his whole force on

the communications of the Grand Army, yet the mischief done was by no means considerable. Such was the activity displayed by General Ertel, the head of the military police, in the rear, that on the approach of the French he collected the wounded, regimental waggons, parks, and waggons of treasure, and retired to Chaumont, where the Emperor's baggage joined him. He then retreated towards Langres and Vesoul, with such regularity and expedition, that, with the exception of a pontoon train, some couriers, and twenty carts, hardly anything was taken. At the same time, out of the least hurt among the wounded he formed a corps at Altkirch, of six thousand men, which, daily augmented by the reinforcements coming up through Germany, soon became so considerable as not only to secure the depots from insult, but sufficient to repress every attempt at insurrection in the adjacent country. Nay, by the able dispositions of General Koller, the adjutant-general of the Austrian army, the capture of the magazines at Chaumont was prevented. Meanwhile Winzingerode encountered Napoleon's rear-guard at Thiéblemont, which confirmed the Emperor in the belief that the Grand Army was pursuing him. Conceiving now that all danger to Paris was averted, he sent orders to Marmont and Mortier, who were retiring towards the capital before the army of Silesia, to march through Vitry and join him there.

25. These two marshals had occupied the position assigned to them at Soissons and Rheims, till the 18th March; when Blücher, having at length obtained from the Low Countries in his rear those supplies of provisions from the want of which, ever since the battle of Laon, he had so grievously suffered,* and having received intelligence of the departure of Napoleon to operate against Schwartzberg on the Aube, made a forward movement, and crossed the Aisne, after some resistance, at

* "I am struggling with the greatest want of provisions; the soldiers have been for some days without bread; and I am cut off from Nancy, so that I have no means of procuring it."—BLÜCHER to SCHWARTZBERG, 17th March 1814; DANILEFSKY, 258.

Bery-au-Bac and the ford of Asfeld. Having thus accomplished the passage of that important river, the Prussian marshal detached his left wing, under Winzingerode, against Mortier at Rheims, who, in no condition to contend with so formidable a force, evacuated it at his approach. Marmont, however, having joined him before he had got far from the town, it was resolved to reoccupy a post of such importance before it was taken possession of in strength by the enemy, and endeavour to make it good. It was held accordingly that day, and Winzingerode was making preparations for an escalade, when, in the night, Mortier again evacuated it; and the two marshals, retiring together, took a position, intending to accept battle, at Fismes. Blucher, however, desirous of re-establishing his communications with the Grand Army, and of operating to the relief of Schwartzemberg, rather than the threatening of Paris, instead of advancing in pursuit of the two marshals, extended himself from Rheims towards Epervay and Vatry; while Marmont and Mortier, abandoning Soissons to its own resources, with a garrison of three thousand men, resolved to keep the field as long as possible in front of Compiègne.

26. On the 21st, however, they received Napoleon's orders to join him in the environs of Vitry. Regretting then that they had so easily abandoned Rheims, they had no alternative but to make the prescribed march by cross roads to Chateau-Thierry, and endeavour to thread their devious way through the allied columns, to join the Emperor on the banks of the Marne. They set out accordingly; but meanwhile General Vincent, who lay at Epervay with seven hundred men, was attacked by Tettenborn with two regiments of Cossacks, and, after a stout resistance, driven out of the town with the loss of half his forces. Deeming, from this check, the great chaussée by Epervay strongly occupied, the marshals resolved to seek their way through by the other road which passes by Etoges and Fère-Champenoise, little dreaming that in so doing they would fall at once into the jaws of the Grand

Army, which was advancing by that very road to the capital. Meanwhile Blucher, despairing of being able, on his side, to prevent the junction of the two marshals with the Emperor, took the resolution of marching across from Rheims, by Chalons to Vitry, to join the Grand Army. Thus, by a singular combination of circumstances, the whole hostile armies were, by the separate resolutions of their chiefs, unknown to each other, concentrating into two masses in close proximity, and mutually crossing to effect that object; the Allies uniting from Vitry to Chalons, and marching towards Paris; the other striving for a point of rendezvous at Vitry, to carry the war towards the Rhine. But the latter required, to effect that object, to pierce with part of their force through the heart of the enemy's army.

27. The march of the two marshals met at first with no interruption; on the 22d they reached Montmirail, on the 23d Etoges, and on the 24th Vatry and Sommesous, where they rested for the night. Intelligence of the occupation of Chalons by the enemy, and of their converging towards Paris, here reached them; and Count Bordesoult, with Marmont's advanced guard, even reported that at Coste he had fallen in with the videttes of the Bavarians belonging to Wrede's corps. The marshals gave no credit, however, to the information, being fully persuaded that the Grand Army was following on the traces of Napoleon; and they were not even awakened from their delusion by the vast illumination of the sky to the eastward, produced by the countless bivouacs of the now united allied host, which was not eight miles distant. At daybreak on the 25th both armies were in motion—the Allies marching towards Paris, the French from Paris towards Vitry—both on the same road. The common rendezvous of Blucher and Schwartzemberg's troops was Fère-Champenoise. The two advanced guards came in sight of each other, near Soude-St-Croix, at eight o'clock in the morning. Marmont's videttes hastily retired on seeing the masses which were approaching; and the marshal

himself, now seriously alarmed, drew back to Sommesous, where he took up a position, and sent an urgent request to Mortier to come to his support. The latter marshal had encountered the cavalry of Doctoroff, forming the advanced guard of Blücher at Dommarin-Létrée; and finding every avenue by which he could proceed blocked up by the enemy, he hastened to obey the summons, and by a cross-march joined Marmont near Lenharée. Both corps then retreated, combating vigorously all the way. But the rapidly increasing numbers of the enemy, and the repeated charges of the Russian horse, threw them into a certain degree of confusion, and several guns had been lost before they reached Conantray, painfully toiling to gain the heights of FÈRE-CHAMPENOISE.

28. The force of the two marshals was twenty-two thousand men, of whom nearly five thousand were horse, with eighty-four guns. Of the allied troops none but cavalry and artillery had yet got up; but they were very numerous, and embraced the flower of the Russian and Austrian army. Twenty thousand horse, including the cuirassiers and chevaliers of the Guard, with a hundred and twenty-eight guns, thundered in close pursuit; and though the French cavalry gallantly struggled against the overwhelming odds by which they were assailed, and their infantry formed square and retreated at first with great regularity, yet, from the long continuance of the fight, and the necessity of constantly retiring when surrounded by the enemy's squadrons, they at last fell into confusion. Several squares were broken by the Russian Chevalier Guards and cuirassiers; the gallant French horse, who had just arrived from Spain, strove to disengage their comrades on foot, but they too were overthrown by a charge of the Russian and Austrian cuirassiers, headed by the Grand-duke Constantine and General Nostitz, who took twenty-four guns; Pahlen's horse, under Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, captured twenty more; while another large body of cavalry appeared suddenly on their extreme left, and threat-

ened to cut off their retreat. At the same time a violent storm of wind and rain arose, which, blowing right in the face of the French infantry, as it had done in that of the Austrians at Dresden [*ante*, Chap. LXXX. § 31], prevented great part of the muskets from going off. A sudden panic now seized the French army: horse, foot, and artillery, breaking their ranks, rushed in a tumultuous torrent towards Fère-Champenoise; vast numbers of guns and caissons were taken; and it was only the gallant countenance of a regiment of heavy cavalry, under the brave Le Clerc, who opportunely came up at the moment, and, charging out of the town right through the fugitives, stopped the horse under Nostitz, that gave the two marshals time to re-form their troops on the other side of its buildings, and with the approach of night saved them from total ruin.

29. While these glorious and important successes were gained by the advanced guard, the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia had left Vitry with Schwartzberg at nine in the morning, following the same great road by Soude-St-Croix, Sommesous, and Conantray. They heard the distant firing as they approached Fère-Champenoise; and, hurrying forward to the front, at length reached that town just as the sun was about to set. Instead of halting there, the Emperor, accompanied by Schwartzberg and a slender suite, set out for the advanced posts, whence a dropping and receding fire was still to be heard. They had not proceeded far when they descried on the right a considerable body of troops, having in convoy a large train of artillery, who were moving for Fère-Champenoise. From the direction they were taking, and the circumstance of their advancing without hesitation towards that town when in the hands of the Allies, they were first thought to be part of Blücher's army. But they soon proved to be French, and were in effect General Pacthod's division, protecting a great convoy of guns and bread, which had been driven into this apparently unaccountable cross-march, to avoid Blücher's advanced

guard, with which, to their infinite astonishment, they had fallen in near Bierges, on the road to Vitry. Immediately forming his troops in square, with the convoy in the centre, Pacthod had long and bravely resisted the impetuous charges of Generals Korff and Wassilchikoff, at the head of the best Russian horse of the army of Silesia. At length, perceiving the enemy's squadrons and artillery every moment thickening around him, he abandoned the convoy, harnessing its horses to the guns so as to double their complement, and was making his way by a flank movement across the fields to Fère-Champenoise, when he fell into the middle of the cavalry of the Russian and Prussian Guards.

30. As soon as Alexander was aware that this corps consisted of enemies, he took the most prompt measures to encompass them and accomplish their destruction. The Russian and Prussian cuirassiers of the Guard were formed on the right; Korff's hussars, who had moved parallel to them in their cross-march, in front; and Wassilchikoff's dragoons on their left and rear. Thus nine thousand chosen horse, supported by seventy guns, were ready to assail six thousand infantry, without cavalry, and with only sixteen pieces of cannon. Having in this manner environed the enemy, Alexander, to prevent a useless effusion of blood, summoned the French general to surrender. Pacthod, albeit sensible that escape was hopeless, nobly refused, and, briefly haranguing his soldiers, exhorted them to die like brave men in defence of their country. Loud cheers followed the generous appeal, and immediately the firing began. Formed into squares, with the ammunition and carriages in the centre, they bravely began a rolling fire, still continuing to retreat towards Fère-Champenoise, and for some time repelled all the charges of the Russian horse. At length, however, the guns, one battery of which was under the immediate command of Lord Cathcart, to whom the Emperor, who was on the spot, had given its direction, were brought to bear upon them. Such

was the deadly precision of their fire, that lanes were soon made in one of the squares, and, the cavalry breaking in at the apertures, the whole were cut down or made prisoners.

31. Meanwhile the intelligence spread like wildfire through the Russian columns coming up, that the Emperor was in danger. With inconceivable ardour the troops rushed forward: hussars, light dragoons, hulans, and cuirassiers, came up at speed or full trot, thick clouds of dust darkening the air, and at last thirteen thousand were on the field. Still the other squares of the French refused to surrender; they even fired on the Emperor's aide-de-camp, Rapatel, whom he had adopted as a legacy from Moreau, who fell dead on the spot; and Alexander, seeing there was nothing else to be done, gave the signal for a general charge. At the head of his Chevalier Guards, that brave prince threw himself upon the square, and dashed in at one of the openings made by the cannon; the soldiers, roused to the highest pitch by the presence and danger of their beloved Czar, followed with irresistible fury, and the mass was penetrated on all sides. Still the French, with heroic resolution, refused to submit. Some in tears, others almost frantic with indignation, kept firing till their last cartridge was exhausted; and Pacthod, in the centre of the square, only surrendered his sword to the Emperor in person. Three thousand of these brave men, many of them national guards, fell nobly resisting on this fatal occasion: their historians justly lament that no monument is erected to their memory by their ungrateful country. Let the first stone in the mausoleum of Fame be laid by their enemies.

32. The trophies of the battle of Fère-Champenoise were immense; seven thousand prisoners, two generals of division, four of brigade, eighty guns, two hundred ammunition wagons, with the whole of the convoy and baggage, fell into the hands of the Allies, whose loss did not exceed two thousand five hundred men. Mortier and Marmont were weakened in all by

nearly eleven thousand men, and half their artillery,—a dreadful loss to two weak corps, upon which, in the absence of the Emperor Napoleon, the defence of Paris had devolved.* The captured generals were received with the most marked distinction and courtesy by the Emperor of Russia, who invited them immediately to his own table, and paid them the most deserved compliments on their valour. The action itself was remarkable for one circumstance, that it took place on a line of march, and that cavalry alone, with artillery, utterly broke and inflicted fearful loss on two corps, consisting of as great numerical force as their assailants, and four-fifths of whom were infantry, with an adequate proportion of guns. The number of troops successively engaged on each side was about twenty-two thousand; and not a musket was fired on the part of the Allies, who, by the force of their cavalry and horse-artillery alone, broke all the squares to which they were opposed, though formed in great part of veteran troops, and took or destroyed half their number.

33. This remarkable fact is calculated to shake the confidence which military men, by general consent since the invention of firearms, have placed in the ability of infantry to resist the utmost efforts of cavalry in at all

* A romantic but melancholy incident occurred on this occasion, which deserves to be recorded. When Lord Londonderry, who was among the foremost in the charge, was in the midst of the mêlée, he perceived a young and beautiful French lady, the wife of a colonel, in a calèche, seized by three Bashkirs, who were proceeding to carry her off. The gallant Englishman immediately rushed forward and rescued her from her lawless oppressors, and, delivering her in charge to his own orderly, directed her to be taken to his own quarters till a place of safety could be procured for her. The orderly accordingly put her *en croupe*, and rode off towards Fère-Champenoise, which was in sight; but on the road he was attacked by a ferocious band of Cossacks, pierced through, and left for dead on the field; while the ruffians seized their victim, who was never more heard of, though the Emperor of Russia, who was greatly moved by the incident, made the utmost efforts to discover what had become of her.—MARQUIS LONDONDERRY'S *War in Germany and France*, 288, 289.

equal numbers; and may lead to a doubt whether the opinion of Napoleon is not better founded—that cavalry still retains the superiority which it enjoyed, in the days when horse first gave Hannibal victory over the Romans at the Ticino and Cannæ, and afterwards, at Zama, rendered Scipio victorious over Hannibal. Certain it is, that it was the decided opinion of Napoleon, that in equal numbers, and equally bravely led, it is still the most important force in war; and that the spread of the opposite opinion, since the decline of chivalry, has arisen from the circumstance of modern generals having never, from the cost with which it is attended, had the means of employing this formidable arm in adequate strength, or to an extent commensurate to the revolutions which in all other ages it has produced in the world.†

34. These brilliant successes laid open to the allied armies the road to Paris, now not more than sixty-five miles distant; and they lost no time in pressing forward to the goal. The reduced strength of Marmont and Mortier left these marshals no means of arresting the enemy; all that they could hope for was to retard his advance, to give the Emperor time to come up to their succour. Such, however, was the rapidity with which the allied advanced guard followed upon their traces, that they had no time to take up a position, or to stop their march. The Grand Army marched, at four in the morning on the 26th, from Fère-Champenoise, on the direct road through Sézanne, to Paris; while Blücher advanced on two roads, from Vertus on Montmirail, and from Etoges on La Ferté-Gaucher. An attempt was made to reach the latter town before the French, so as to cut off their retreat, and the latter aim was very nearly effected. The Prussians, under Kleist, had received orders to anticipate them at this important point, and their ad-

† “My decided opinion,” said Napoleon, “is, that cavalry, supposing the men on both sides to be equal in number, equally brave, and equally well led, must always break infantry.”—LAS CASES, vii. 184.

vanced guard had accomplished the task, and established themselves in so solid a manner, that all Mortier's efforts to force a passage proved ineffectual. Meanwhile the indefatigable Pahlen, who with the advanced posts of the Grand Army never lost sight of the enemy, was closely pursuing their rear-guard; and no sooner did he hear the firing at La Ferté-Gaucher, than, foreseeing that they would endeavour to save themselves by a detour to the left, he quitted the high-road, and, crossing the fields rapidly, reached Maisoncelles, where the head of Mortier's columns had already begun to appear, who had sought this very outlet from otherwise inevitable destruction.

35. Like Napoleon on the Beresina, the French marshals were on the eve of total destruction; and, if Pahlen had been left to himself, they would have met it. For their troops, worn out and dejected, were in no condition to withstand the charge of the victorious Russian squadrons; and such had been their losses in artillery the day before, that they had only seven pieces with them. From this hopeless state they were relieved by the ill-timed prudence of the hereditary Prince of Würtemberg, Pahlen's commander, who was seized with such apprehensions about his artillery being lost in the fields or cross-roads, that he ordered Pahlen to return to the highway, which the latter officer, burning with indignation at seeing the enemy thus permitted to escape, reluctantly obeyed. Overjoyed to see him retire, the French immediately drew off their troops from the attack on La Ferté-Gaucher; and, defiling rapidly across the fields to the left, reached Provins through Courtacon. They were followed, however, by the advanced guard of Pahlen's Cossacks; and no sooner were the first spears discerned, than, rushing tumultuously out of Provins, they retired in haste to Nangis, from whence, without further loss, they reached the capital; Mortier through Guignes, and Marmont through Melun.

36. Meanwhile the Grand Army, and that of Blücher, continued their march,

without interruption, towards Paris. The Russians of Raefskoi's corps and the Württembergers led the van: then came the Austrians and Bavarians: behind them the Guards and grenadiers—all marching along, or on either side of the high-road to Meaux. The columns of the army of Silesia were seen like a waving dark line to the right. Indescribable was the enthusiasm of the troops; magnificent the spectacle which the military pageant exhibited. The weather, which for some months before had been so severe and dreary, had now become beautiful, and the rays of the ascending sun were reflected from the glittering arms of the host. Every step was light-some, joy beamed in every countenance, ardour glanced from every eye, and rendered this triumphant march truly magnificent. A flourish of martial music, the loud roll of the drums, and the louder cheers of the soldiers, announced the presence of the Emperor, as he rode successively up to every regiment. Several times he passed through the Guards, and conversed with the generals and officers of corps, many of whom had been trained under his own eye; often he ascended an eminence on the roadside, to gaze on the vast columns, which were all pressing forward to the completion of their mighty enterprise. "My children," said the Czar, "it is now but a step to Paris." "We will take it, father," they answered with loud cheers; "we remember Moscow."*

37. Foreseeing that Napoleon would,

* "An incident occurred on this day, strikingly characteristic of the true magnanimity which warmed the bosom of this great man. On occasion of a deliberation the day before, he had said to Prince Volkonsky, in allusion to some apprehensions he had expressed of the amount of Napoleon's force, 'You always see the enemy double.' Musing on the displeasure of his sovereign, the prince was riding on, pensive and alone. No sooner did the Emperor see him approach, than he called him to come near, and said publicly, in presence of the King of Prussia and a numerous suite, 'I wronged you yesterday, and I publicly ask your pardon.' Napoleon, though greatly Alexander's superior in genius, could not have done this: he could conquer the world, but not subdue himself." —DANILEFSKY, 323.

in all probability, as soon as he received intelligence of the advance on Paris, endeavour to regain the capital by the circuitous route of Troyes, Sens, and Fontainebleau, the greater part of the next night was employed by the Emperor in despatching orders in all directions, as well to Winzingerode as to Chernicheff and the other partisans. They were enjoined to preserve the communications to the southward, to keep a vigilant look-out, and forward the earliest intelligence to headquarters of any movement on Napoleon's part of which they could receive advices. Meanwhile, however, Winzingerode himself, having borne the shock of the French Emperor's greatly superior forces, had suffered a severe defeat. Napoleon, as already mentioned, had rested on the 25th at Doulevant, extending his wings in all directions in order to spread alarm in the enemy's rear; and although Winzingerode was in sight of the rear-guard, under Macdonald, yet with such diligence had the directions of Alexander been obeyed, that the reports constantly were, that they were followed by the whole allied army, under the Emperor and Schwartzberg in person. Meanwhile, the march of a body of French troops towards Chaumont spread such terror in the rear that the Emperor of Austria, Lord Aberdeen, Counts Razumoffsky and Stadion, and the whole *corps diplomatique* who lay there, were obliged to mount on horseback, and ride thirteen leagues, without drawing bridle, by cross-roads to Dijon. The alarm, swelling as it receded from the real point of danger, spread to the Rhine, where it was universally believed that the whole victorious French army was immediately to be upon them. But on the day following, Napoleon, uneasy at the account transmitted by Macdonald, that he saw only horse in the enemy's outposts, began to suspect that he was not in reality followed by the Grand Army, and gave orders for the troops to retrace their steps towards St Dizier. The reflux tide soon brought an overwhelming force on Winzingerode, who had meanwhile

occupied St Dizier with five thousand horse, the remaining three thousand being detached to the front under Tettenborn to gain information. The better to deceive the enemy, Winzingerode ordered rooms at St Dizier for the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia, who, he said, might be expected on the following day—a fact which was immediately communicated to Napoleon by his devoted adherents in that town.

38. Tettenborn, seeing that he was about to have the whole of Napoleon's army upon his hands, sent word to Winzingerode to send him no reinforcements, as none he could send could enable him to keep his ground, and the troops coming up would only obstruct his retreat. Winzingerode, accordingly, drew up his troops in two lines, extending from St Dizier to the neighbourhood of Perthes, on the right bank of the Marne, hoping by this imposing array to gain time for Tettenborn's advanced guard to retire. The attack of the French, however, was so rapid, and with such overwhelming force, that there were no means whatever of either stopping or retarding it. Their troops deployed with incredible rapidity: column after column descended from the neighbouring plateau into the valley of the Marne: powerful batteries were erected on all the eminences, which sent a storm of round-shot and bombs through the allied ranks; and under cover of this fire, the French infantry, cavalry, and artillery crossed the Marne at the ford of Hallignicourt, and came close to Tettenborn, who had no means whatever of escape. With his little band of heroes, however, he plunged into the midst of the French horse, who were ten thousand strong, and broke the first and second lines; but, being speedily enveloped by greatly superior forces, he was routed, and driven with great loss towards Vitry. Winzingerode's main body was next assailed by ten thousand French cavalry, supported by a large body of infantry; while the succeeding columns of the army, stretching as far as the eye could reach, presented the appearance of an interminable host. The

Russian horse were unable to resist the shock; their artillery had time only to fire a few rounds: in a few minutes they were fairly routed. In utter confusion they now made for the road to Bar-le-Duc, where Benkendorff, with a regiment of dragoons and three of Cossacks, with some guns, had taken up a good position, flanked by an impassable morass. By the firm countenance of his brave rear-guard, the pursuit was checked; and Winzingerode gained time to re-form his men, and continued his retreat to Bar-le-Duc without further molestation, from whence next day he retired to Chalons. The French loss in this brilliant affair did not exceed seven hundred men, while the Allies were weakened by two thousand, of whom five hundred were made prisoners, and nine pieces of cannon.

39. This was the last gleam of sunshine which fortune bestowed upon the conqueror who had so long basked in her smiles; henceforth he was involved in one disaster after another, till he was precipitated from the throne. Such as it was, it had a most disastrous effect on the fortunes of Napoleon, for it inspired him with renewed confidence in his fortunes, and confirmed him in the opinion that he was on the traces of the whole allied army, and that he had only to follow up his advantages to insure their entire destruction. Accordingly, in the first moment of triumph, after his success at St Dizier, he ordered a strong body of troops to approach Vitry; and as the commandant refused to surrender, he marched thither next day himself, ordered a hundred and twenty guns to be planted against it, and threatened in a few hours to reduce the town to ashes. He soon, however, received intelligence which gave him more serious subject of meditation. From the prisoners taken on the field, he learned that Winzingerode's corps consisted only of cavalry and horse-artillery, with a few battalions of light infantry, drawn from the garrison of Vitry; and immediately after some peasants came up from Fère-Champenoise with full details of the march of the allied armies towards Paris, and the disastrous com-

bat which had taken place there two days before, between the retreating marshals and their cavalry. The veil now dropped from before his eyes; all doubt was at an end. It was all but certain that the Allies, fully three days' march ahead, would be in Paris before him. "Nothing but a thunderbolt," said he, "can save us:" and immediately drawing off his whole troops and guns from before Vitry, he retired with his staff to St Dizier, where he shut himself up in his cabinet, and spent the whole night in intently studying the maps. He resolved, after much consideration, instead of pursuing his movement on the Rhenish and frontier fortresses, to return forthwith to Paris; and to avoid the allied army, which lay between, he chose the road by Doulevant, Vassy, Troyes, Sens, and Fontainebleau. Orders to that effect were immediately given, and by daybreak on the morning of the 28th all the army was in motion by Doulevant for Troyes.

40. Meanwhile the Allies were not idle. No force capable of even retarding their advance to the capital existed in the field; and they met with little interruption except at the passage of the Marne. The army of Silesia approached this river, which lay directly across their advance to Paris. Count Compans and General Vincent, with five thousand men, were retiring before them, and, like good soldiers, they broke down the bridges over the river, and took post on the opposite bank, at Trilport and Meaux, to dispute the passage. General Emmanuel, with the advanced guard of the army of Silesia, soon came up, and established a bridge of pontoons under the fire of artillery; the Cossacks crossed over, for the most part, by swimming their horses; and soon the bridge groaned under the weight of five Prussian regiments, which, with the Russian horse, instantly attacked the enemy, drove them back into Meaux, and, following close on their heels, expelled them from that town. Two bridges were immediately established at Trilport, and one at Meaux; and the whole of the 28th was employed in transporting the immense

masses and convoys of both armies, which, according to the plan concerted, here united, to the right bank of the river. The Emperor then reviewed Sacken's corps, and publicly thanked them for the extraordinary energy and valour they had displayed since the commencement of the campaign. Their diminished numbers, for they were now only six thousand out of twenty thousand who had crossed the Rhine, as well as the bronzed countenances and tattered garments of the men, told the desperate nature of the service which they had gone through. But though their clothes and equipments were worn out, their arms were clean and in good condition, and the artillery train in perfect working order, though the loss by the fracture by an enemy's ball was often supplied by the wheel of a farmer's cart.

41. The Allies had now entered a rich champaign country, adorned with woods, villas, orchards, smiling fields, and all the charming indications of long-established prosperity. It therefore not only abounded with resources of all kinds for the use of the troops, but offered almost irresistible temptations to the violence and marauding of conquest. This was more especially to be dreaded in a host such as that which now approached Paris, consisting of the soldiers of six different nations, extending from the Rhine to the wall of China, many of them of lawless and half-savage habits, all smarting under the recollection of recent wrongs and unbearable oppression. True to the noble principles on which he had

throughout maintained the contest, Alexander immediately issued a proclamation to his soldiers, enjoining the strictest discipline, and forbidding any supplies to be obtained for the troops, except through the intervention of the mayors and local authorities.* Not satisfied with this, he addressed with his own hand a circular to the commanders of corps belonging to the other nations, earnestly entreating them to take every possible means to preserve the strictest discipline among their troops.†

42. The effect of these measures, not less politic than humane, was immense. A vast crowd of peasantry, indeed, inspired with terror, with their horses and cattle, at first fled into Paris, before the columns of the allied army; but it was soon discovered that order was preserved by the invaders; and, ere long, the inhabitants remained at home, gazing with amazement at the endless columns of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, which, for days together, defiled past them towards the capital. After the repeated accounts which had been published of the defeat and ruin of the allied armies, it was with unbounded astonishment that they beheld the extent of their hosts. They admired the superb array of the Guards, the dazzling cuirasses of the horsemen, the formidable trains of artillery; and shuddered when they gazed on the long and desultory array of Cossacks and Bashkirs sweeping by, speaking uncouth tongues, singing Oriental songs, giving fearful token of that vast moral revolution which had thus brought the

* "It is the immutable will of his majesty the Emperor, that the troops under your command should observe the strictest discipline, and on no account whatever leave their bivouacs to go into the villages; and that their wants, such as fire, wood, straw, should not be supplied otherwise than through the intervention of the mayor. You cannot but be aware how much the good conduct of our troops in the present circumstances may influence the common success; and therefore his Majesty will hold you personally responsible for the execution of this order."—ALEXANDER'S *Circular Order*, 26th March 1814; DANILEFSKY, 334.

† "At the moment we are approaching Paris, it is only by the strictest subordination among the troops that we can hope to

obtain the important results we have in view. You were one of the first to be convinced of the necessity of gaining over the affections of the inhabitants of Paris to the cause we are maintaining; but shall we be acting on this conviction, if the villages round Paris be left a prey to plunderers, instead of finding protection from our armies? I earnestly entreat of you to use every possible means to prevent acts of violence. Every commander of a corps, or detachment, should be made personally responsible for whatever disorder may be committed. Your active exertions on this occasion will secure you the general gratitude, and double the high respect I entertain for you."—ALEXANDER to MARSHAL COUNT WREDE, March 26, 1814; DANILEFSKY, 334, 335.

children of the desert into the heart of European civilisation.

43. As the allied troops approached Paris, the resistance of Marmont and Mortier's retiring corps, which had now completed their roundabout march by Nangis and Melun, and interposed between the invaders and the capital, was again felt. Compans' division did not evacuate the forest of Bondy till it had been turned on all sides, and after some sharp firing. Thence the sovereigns inclined to the left, and ascended an eminence on the roadside by a path through brushwood. The sun had just set; a cool breeze refreshed the air; there was not a cloud in the sky. All at once, on the right, the buildings of Montmartre appeared, and the stately edifices of PARIS burst upon the view. Indescribable was the sensation which this sight produced. From rank to rank, from mouth to mouth, the thrilling words passed; in a few seconds the electric shock was felt as far as the eye could reach in the columns; and all, breaking their order, hurried forward to the front, and crowded up the ascent.* The last rays of the sun were still illuminating the dome of the Invalides, the summit of the Pantheon yet reflected his beams; while they gazed the light ceased, and darkness began to overspread the massy structures of the capital. Forgotten in an instant were the fatigues of the campaign. Wounds, fallen brothers, lost friends, were as nothing. One only feeling, that of exultation, filled every bosom; one only emotion, that of gratitude, swelled every heart. After inhaling, during several minutes, the entrancing spectacle, the allied sovereigns, slow and pensive at the very magnitude of their

triumph, descended from the height, and proceeded to Bondy, the last post station before Paris, where they passed the night.

44. And what was the state of Paris—of the great Revolutionary capital—when the danger could no longer be concealed; when crowds of peasants, flying before the foe, beset the barriers with trembling agitation; when the rattle of musketry was at last heard in the plain of St Denis, and the illumination of the eastern sky told the affrighted inhabitants that the forces of banded Europe slept round watchfires at their gates? Fearful indeed, for eight-and-forty hours, had been the note of preparation within its walls. In vain the agents of the police everywhere placarded proclamations, assuring the people that the Allies would never venture to attack the immortal city; that its means of defence were invincible; that five hundred guns were ready to spread death among the foe; and that it would be sufficient simply to close the barriers to exterminate them to the last man.† These high-sounding expressions could not conceal the real facts which were before their eyes. They could not make the citizens blind to the endless crowds of peasants in consternation, who defiled in confusion along the Boulevards, conveying with them their wives, their children, their horses and cattle, into the last asylum of the capital.

45. The extreme proposals which the

† "The Allies regard the pillage and destruction of the capital as the recompense and end of their invasion; they already make a boast of having entered it without resistance—of having sacked it; and they propose to send off the *élite* of its workmen, of its artisans, of its artists, to the depths of Russia, to people their deserts, and then they will set fire to all the quarters of the town. But with what hope of success can they enter Paris? What would become of them in the midst of an immense population, armed, inflamed, and resolute to defend itself? Paris contains twenty thousand horses, which might convey to the heights five hundred pieces of cannon. It would be easy to barricade the streets, and to offer at every point an invincible resistance. It would be enough even to close the barriers to exterminate them to the last man! No! The Allies will never approach Paris!" *Affiché*, Paris, 29th March 1814; BEAUCHAMPE, ii. 191, 292.

* "Jerusalem, behold, appear'd in sight,
Jerusalem they view, they see, they spy;
Jerusalem with merry noise they greet,
With joyful shouts, and acclamations sweet.
As when a troop of jolly sailors row,
Some new-found land and country to descry;
Through dang'rous seas and under stars unknown,
Thrall to the faithless waves, and trothless sky;
If once the wished shore begin to show,
They all salute it with a joyful cry,
And each to other show the land in haste,
Forgetting quite their pains and perils past."
—Tasso, *Ger. Lib.*, iii. 8, 4.

more violent of the Jacobin emissaries promulgated in the name of the Emperor, that they should arm the populace, burn the suburbs, destroy the bridges, barricade the streets, and, if necessary, retire to the south of the Seine, there to defend themselves to the last extremity, till the arrival of the heads of his columns, augmented the general consternation. Universal spoliation, conflagration, and massacre, were anticipated, from such letting loose of the long-pent-up passions of the Revolution. The banks were closed; the shops shut up: every one hid his most valuable movables; vast quantities of plate and treasure were buried; the gaming-houses were stopped; and, what had been unknown in the bloodiest days of the Revolution, *the theatres were empty*. Preparations were at length making by the government, but they were of a kind to increase rather than diminish the terrors of the people. Six thousand troops of the line, and twenty thousand national guards, were reviewed in the Place Carrousel, and marched along the quays; but the gloomy aspect of the soldiers, the long trains of artillery which traversed the streets, the distant thunder of the enemy's cannon, the ceaseless torrent of disorderly peasants flying before the invaders, which streamed over the Boulevards, and the wounded and dying who were brought in from the advanced posts, told but too plainly that war in all its horrors was fast approaching the mighty capital.

46. In the midst of the general consternation, the council of state was summoned to deliberate on the grave question, whether or not the Empress and the King of Rome should remain in Paris to await the fate of arms, or be withdrawn to a place of safety beyond the Loire. The minister of war, Clarke, briefly unfolded the military situation of the capital, the troops of the line, artillery, and national guards, who could be assembled for its defence. The forces of the Allies were estimated at a hundred and fifty thousand men; and in these circumstances the minister declared he could not answer for the safety of the Empress and her son. Vari-

ous opinions as to what should be done followed this exposition. Boulay de la Meurthe, an old republican, proposed that they should convey the Empress to the Hôtel de Ville, and show her to the people in the faubourgs, holding her infant in her arms; that now was the time to display the heroism of Maria Theresa. Savary expounded the means which he could put in motion for rousing the masses. Molé combated the removing the Empress, by observing, "that the greatest of all errors, if resistance was determined on, would be to leave Paris without a government—that left to themselves they would speedily abandon the Emperor." To this opinion Talleyrand assented. Clarke insisted "that it was a mistake to consider Paris as the centre of the imperial power: that the power of the sovereign would follow him everywhere; and as long as a village remained in France unoccupied by the enemy, that was his capital."

47. On the vote being taken, nineteen out of twenty-three voted for making the contest a popular one, and transporting the Empress and the seat of the government, as in the days of the League, to the Hôtel de Ville. When this division was made known, Joseph produced an express order from the Emperor, dated from Rheims not a fortnight before, to the effect that in no event should they permit the Empress and the King of Rome to fall into the hands of the enemy; that if the Allies approached Paris with forces plainly irresistible, the Empress, with the King of Rome, and the great dignitaries of the empire, should be removed to the other side of the Loire; in fine, that he would rather see his son in the Seine than in the hands of the enemy.* This precise and definitive order, which provided for the very case that had occurred, put an end to

* "You are in no event to permit the Empress and the King of Rome to fall into the hands of the enemy. I am about to manoeuvre in such a manner that you may possibly be several days without hearing from me. Should the enemy advance upon Paris with such forces as to render all resistance impossible, send off in the direction of the Loire the Empress, the King of Rome, the great dignitaries, the ministers, the offi-

all deliberation; and it was arranged that Joseph should remain to direct the defence of the capital, but that the principal officers of state should accompany the empress and the King of Rome beyond the Loire.

48. The departure of the Empress took place next day, and completed the discouragement of the inhabitants of Paris. A great crowd assembled at the Place Carrousel, when the carriages came to the door at daybreak; and though none ventured openly to arraign the orders of government, yet many were the condemnations uttered in private at the timid policy which virtually abandoned the capital to the enemy, by withdrawing those whose presence was most calculated to have preserved authority, and stimulated resistance, among its inhabitants. The King of Rome, though only three years of age, cried violently when they came to take him away; he exclaimed that they were betraying his papa, and clung to the curtains of his apartment with such tenacity, that it required all the influence of his governess, Madame de Montesquiou, to induce him to quit his hold. He was still in tears when he was carried down to the carriage of the Empress. Marie Louise was calm and resigned, but deadly pale. At eleven o'clock in the morning the mournful procession set out, and, defiling by the quay of the river, took the road for Rambouillet. The long train of carriages passed slowly along, amidst the tears of a large body of people, while the thunder of the cannon was already heard from the direction of St Denis. Terror now froze every heart; all felt that resistance was hopeless, and that nothing remained but to make the best terms that could be obtained from the victors.

49. Paris, now almost as well known to the senate, the president of the council of state, the great officers of the crown, and the treasure. Never quit my son; and keep in mind that I would rather see him in the Seine than in the hands of the enemies of France. The fate of Astyanax, a prisoner in the hands of the Greeks, has always appeared to me the most deplorable in history."—NAPOLEON TO JOSEPH, *Rheims*, 16th March 1814; *CAPEFIGURE*, x. 443, 444.

as London to every person in England, whether male or female, who has received a liberal education, may not be equally familiar in future times, or in other countries; and even to those who know it best, it is never irksome to read a description of a city in which some of the happiest days of their life may have been spent. Situated on both banks of the Seine, the French metropolis is as favourably adapted for external defence as for internal ornament and salubrity. From Mount Valerien on the west, to the fortress of Vincennes on the east, it is protected by a line of hills running on the northern bank of the Seine, and presenting a natural fortification against an enemy approaching from the north or east, the quarter from which danger is principally to be apprehended. Clichy, Romainville, Belleville, the plateau of Chaumont, Montmartre, are the names which have been affixed to this ridge; and although not strengthened by fieldworks, yet these natural advantages constituted a very formidable line of defence. The ridge is about three miles and a-half in length, and the woods, orchards, gardens, villas, and enclosures with which it is covered, rendered it in a peculiar manner susceptible of defence by a body of militia or national guards, who might be unequal to a combat with regular forces in the open field. The plain of St Denis, between Montmartre and Romainville, extends up to the gates of the capital; but it is enfiladed on either side by the guns from those elevated heights, the fire of batteries on which, intersecting each other, rendered all access by the great road from St Denis impossible till the summits were carried. Montmartre, a conical hill which rises to a considerable height, and is nearly covered with buildings, presented, if adequately furnished with cannon, a most formidable point for defence; but the positions of Chaumont, Belleville, and Menilmontant were less compact and more open to a flank attack. The whole defence of the capital, however, depended on the possession of these heights: if they were taken, Paris

was at the mercy of the conqueror. Bombs from Montmartre and Chaumont would carry as far as the Rue Montblanc, and into the very heart of the city; the old ramparts had long since been converted into shady walks, well known as the principal scene of enjoyment in the capital; and the barriers on the principal road, connected together by a brick wall, presented the means only of preventing smuggling, or aiding the efforts of the police, but could oppose no resistance whatever to the attack of regular soldiers.

50. What chiefly strikes a stranger on his first arrival in Paris, is the extraordinary variety and beauty of the public edifices. The long-established greatness of the French sovereigns, the taste for architecture which several of them possessed, and the durable materials of which the capital is built, have conspired, in a succession of ages, to store it with a series of public and private edifices, which are not only for the most part exceedingly imposing in themselves, but in the highest degree interesting, from the picture they present of the successive changes of manners, habits, and taste, during the prolonged lifetime of the monarchy. From the stately remains of the baths of Julian, now devoted to the humble purpose of a cooper's warehouse in the faubourg St Germain, to the recent magnificent structures begun by Napoleon, and completed by the Bourbons, it exhibits an unbroken series of buildings, still entire, erected during fifteen centuries, connecting together the ancient and modern world, and forming, like Gibbon's History of Rome, a bridge which spans over the dark gulf of the middle ages. The towers of Notre-Dame, which rose amidst the austerity of Gothic taste, and were loaded with the riches of Catholic superstition; the Hôtel de Ville, the florid architecture of which recalls the civil wars of the Fronde and the League; the Marais, with its stately edifices, carrying us back to the rising splendour of the Bourbon princes; the Louvre, which witnessed the frightful massacre of Charles IX.; the Pont Neuf,

which bears the image of Henry IV.; the Tuileries, recalling at once the splendour of Louis XIV., and the sufferings of his martyred descendant; the Place Louis XV., which beheld in succession the orgies of royalty and the horrors of the Revolution; the column of the Place Vendôme, which perpetuates the glories of Napoleon—present a series of monuments unequalled in interest by any other city of modern Europe, and which may possibly, to future ages, exceed even the attractions of the Eternal City itself. Every step in Paris is historical; the shadows of the dead arise on every side; the very stones breathe.

51. The streets in the old part of the town are narrow, and consequently, perhaps, unhealthy; but their straitness only renders them the more imposing, their buildings being always seen in rapid perspective. The old stone piles, often five storeys in height, some of them contemporary with the Crusades, seem to frown with contempt on the modern passenger. It was in these narrow streets, the focus of the Revolution, that the great bulk of the inhabitants, estimated in all at that period at six hundred thousand souls, dwelt. On the banks of the river a wider space is seen. Light arches span the stream, and long lines of pillared scenery attest the riches and taste of a more refined age. Nor is the beauty of architectural monuments inferior to the interest of ancient associations. The colossal proportions, and yet delicate finishing, of the arch of Neuilly; the exquisite peristyle of the church of the Madeleine; the matchless façade of the Louvre; the noble portico of the Pantheon; the lofty column of Austerlitz, will ever attract the cultivated in taste from every quarter of Europe,* even after the political greatness of France has declined, and

* They may well put the architects of England to the blush, for the painful inferiority which the modern structures of London exhibit. The modern structures, observe. Nothing worthy of the nation has been built in public edifices in London in our time. Compare St Paul's or Westminster Abbey with the National Gallery, and say whether we have not fallen from a race of giants to a brood of pigmies.

its glories exist only in the records of historic fame.

52. The troops which remained at the disposal of Joseph, for the defence of the heights of Paris, were very inconsiderable, and altogether inadequate to the defence of so extensive a position. The national guard, indeed, was thirty thousand strong, but not more than half of this number were armed; and they were, for the most part, absorbed in the guarding of the twelve barriers of the city, or the service of the interior: so that not more than five thousand were available for service on the external defences. Marmont commanded the right, which rested on Belleville and Chaumont, with detachments on all the points susceptible of defence, as far as Vincennes; and Mortier the left, which extended between the canal of Ourcq and Montmartre, across the great road from St Denis, with posts as far as Neuilly. It was easy to foresee that the weight of the contest would be around the hill of Montmartre and the *battles* of Chaumont; and it was there, accordingly, that the main strength of the French was placed. The wreck of fifteen divisions stood on the line of defence, which, in former days, would have contained at least ninety thousand combatants; but so wasted had they been under the dreadful campaigns of the last two years, that they could not now muster more than twenty thousand infantry and six thousand horse. In Marmont's wing, the skeletons of seventy battalions were required to make up eight thousand men. Their air was firm, but sad: they were resolved to lay down their lives for their country: but they knew the enemy they had to combat, and were aware it would be in vain.

53. Including the national guards, who were without the barriers, and all the depots which had been brought forward, not more than thirty-five thousand men took part in the defence; but they were supported by a hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, fifty-three of which were of position, some on the extreme right being manned by the young men of the Poly-

technic school. Of the Allies, a hundred thousand combatants were in line, and ready to take part in the attack; the remainder of the force being left behind on the Marne, at Trilport and Meaux, to guard the communications and keep an eye on the movements of Napoleon. That great commander, as already mentioned, had projected the erection of powerful fortifications on the heights now threatened by the Allies, after his return from Austerlitz in 1806 [*ante*, Chap. LVII. § 73], and had been only prevented by the dread of awakening the Parisians from their slumber of security under the shadow of the glory of the great nation. Memorable warning! How often is national security endangered, or national existence shortened, by heedless pride or shortsighted economy obstructing the sagacious foresight of prophetic wisdom, requiring present sacrifice in money, or threatening a passing mortification to vanity!

54. Joseph, on the 29th, published a spirited proclamation to his troops and the inhabitants of Paris, in which he exhorted them to combat bravely to maintain their ground until the arrival of the Emperor, who might be hourly expected.* Schwartzberg, on his part, with the approbation of the allied sovereigns, issued a remarkable address to the inhabitants of Paris, in which the precise language was used which Louis XVI., two-and-twenty years before, had recommended to the allied sovereigns as the only tone which was likely to vanquish the Revolution, by declaring war on it, but not on France; but which had been then and since un-

* "Citizens of Paris! A column of the enemy has advanced to Meaux. It approaches by the road of Germany; but the Emperor follows it closely, at the head of a victorious army. The Council of the Regency has provided for the safety of the Emperor and the King of Rome. I remain with you. Let us arm to defend our capital—its monuments, its riches, our wives, our children, all that is dear to us. Let this great city become a camp for a few moments; and let the enemy find his shame under those walls which he hopes to pass in triumph. The Emperor marches to our succour; second him by a brief and vigorous resistance, and we shall preserve the honour of France."
—THIBAUDEAU, ix. 610, 620.

accountably forgotten amidst the ambition and separate interests of the potentates who composed the alliance.* The allusions in this proclamation to the insatiable spirit of conquest with which all the governments of France for twenty years had been animated, and to the facility with which peace might be obtained, on honourable terms, by France, and to the example of Bordeaux, where Louis XVIII. had already been proclaimed, pointed, not obscurely, to a restoration of the exiled princes as the sole condition on which, since the rupture of the negotiations at Châtillon, the Allies considered it possible that a pacification could be effected. They had already erected the conquered districts into a sort of province, with the direction of which the Count d'Artois, who was at Vesoul, was intrusted. The proclamation, with a proposal for the capitulation of Paris, was sent to the French advanced posts; but the

* "Inhabitants of Paris! The allied armies are under your walls. The object of their march to the capital of France is founded on the hope of a sincere and durable pacification with her. For twenty years Europe has been deluged with blood and tears. Every attempt to put an end to these calamities has proved vain; for this reason, that in the very government which oppresses you, there has been found an insurmountable obstacle to peace. Who among you is not convinced of this truth? The allied sovereigns desire to find in France a beneficent government, which shall strengthen her alliance with all nations; and therefore, in the present circumstances, it is the duty of Paris to hasten the general pacification. We await the expression of your opinion, with a degree of impatience proportioned to the mighty consequences which must result from your determination. Declare it: and you shall at once find defenders in the armies standing before your walls. Parisians! the state of France, the proceedings of the inhabitants of Bordeaux, the peaceable occupation of Lyons, and the real sentiments of your countrymen, are known to you. In these examples you will find the end of war and domestic discord: it is to be found nowhere else. The preservation of your city and of your tranquillity shall be the object of the prudent measures which the Allies will not fail to take, in concert with such of your authorities as enjoy the general confidence. Troops shall not be quartered upon you. Such are the sentiments with which Europe, arrayed before your walls, now addresses you. Hasten to justify her confidence in your patriotism and prudence."—DANILEFSKY, 345, 346; and CAPEFIGURE, x. 468; and *Die Grosse Chronik*, iii. 832.

French marshals, like brave and faithful men, rejected it, and resolved to maintain their posts to the last extremity.

55. At two in the morning of the 30th March the *générale* beat in all the quarters of Paris, to summon the national guard to assemble at their different points of rendezvous. One-and-twenty years had elapsed since, at the same hour, it had called them, amidst the clang of the tocsin, to muster for the defence of the throne on the 10th August 1793. They had then failed at the decisive moment—they had basely surrendered their sovereign to an infuriated rabble, and abandoned the nation to the government of the multitude [*ante*, Chap. vii. § 93]. They now had their reward. They were to witness the degradation and punishment of their country, the defeat of its armies, the overthrow of its independence; the iron was to enter into the soul of the nation. Bravely, however, they repaired to their posts, amidst the tears of their wives and children, who never expected to see them more. Hardly had the clock in the church of St Denis struck five in the morning, when the anxious eyes from the summit of the heights of Romainville discovered several dark masses appearing beyond Pantin, on the road to Meaux. Still not a gun was fired on either side; the level glance of the sun illuminated the peaceful slopes of Romainville, and the gilded dome of the Invalides was only beginning to lighten before his rays. Suddenly the discharge of artillery was heard on the right; the dark mass quickly became edged with fire; and soon the roar of above a hundred pieces of cannon announced to the trembling inhabitants of the capital that the last day of the Revolution had arrived. Raefskoi, supported by the reserves of Barclay, was charged with the attack on the French centre, between Pantin and Vincennes, and especially of the heights of Belleville; the hereditary prince of Wurtemberg, supported by Giulay's Austrians on the left, was to assail the bridges of the Marne at St Maur and Charenton, to clear the wood of Vincennes, blockade

its castle, and threaten the Barrière du Trône. On the right the army of Silesia was to advance on Montmartre on two sides; Count Langeron from Clichy and St Denis; Kleist, York, and Woronzoff, on the allied left, from the villages of La Villette and La Chapelle. Above a hundred thousand men were destined to co-operate in the attack; but they did not all arrive in action at the same time; the weight of the contest long fell on Raefskoi and Barclay alone in the centre, and thence the unlooked-for continuance and bloody nature of the strife.

56. At six in the morning the firing of musketry began in the centre, by Prince Eugene of Wurtemberg, with his division, issuing from the village of Pantin; while Raefskoi himself, with Gortschakoff's infantry and Pahlen's cavalry, moved direct on Romainville. Marmont, however, convinced of the error which had been committed in not holding these villages the evening before, was advancing to occupy them with Boyer's division of the Young Guard, when he met Prince Eugene's Russians on an eminence a little beyond Pantin. A furious conflict immediately commenced, which soon extended to Romainville: the numbers were equal, the resolution and skill on the opposite sides well matched; and so bloody was the combat, that in a short time fifteen hundred of the Russians had fallen. Mortier, finding he was not attacked, sent two divisions to aid Marmont, and with their aid the Russian cuirassiers were routed, and Prince Eugene driven back, still bravely fighting, into the villages.

57. Feeling himself unequal to such a conflict for any considerable time, he wrote to Barclay, representing his situation, but declaring his resolution to die at his post; * and shortly afterwards, Raefskoi, having completed his circular march, commenced operations on the left. His infantry carried Mon-

treuil, and his cavalry pushed on to Charonne, nearly in the rear of the Young Guard at Romainville, which checked the advance of Marmont's victorious division; but still decided nothing. It was now eight o'clock, and the Emperor of Russia had just arrived on the field of battle, uncertain of the force of the enemy, or of the probable time of Napoleon's approach; he learned with dismay that Blucher's forces had not yet reached the neighbourhood of Montmartre—that the hereditary Prince of Wurtemberg and Giulay were still far behind, on the left—and that Raefskoi was overmatched, and his men fast falling, in the centre. Instantly perceiving the danger, the Emperor immediately ordered Barclay to bring up the grenadiers, and Russian and Prussian Guards, to the support of Raefskoi; and soon these noble troops were seen marching in double-quick time, on the road to Pantin.

58. Their arrival at the scene of danger speedily changed the face of affairs. Prince Eugene, long oppressed by superior numbers, now in his turn had the advantage. General Mesenzoff advanced at the head of three Russian divisions of the Guards to the support of Raefskoi; and their united force, finding that it was impossible to advance in the plain till the heights were carried, from the summit of which the French guns vomited forth death on all sides, made a general attack on the wooded hills of Romainville, which were carried after a most desperate conflict. The French who occupied them were driven back to the heights of Ménilmontant and Belleville. At the same time, as the Prince-Royal of Wurtemberg had not yet come up, Count Pahlen pushed forward a body of his dragoons towards Vincennes, who, meeting with no opposition, approached the Barrière du Trône, where twenty guns, manned by the scholars of the Polytechnic School, received them with a point-blank discharge. Hardly, however, was the first round fired, when the Russian hulans made a dash in flank at the guns, which were taken, with the

* His words were—"The second corps is ready and willing to be sacrificed; think of us and help us." Barclay answered—"Many thanks for your resolution: the grenadiers are prepared to reinforce you."—DANILEFFSKY, 852.

gallant youths who served them; and the seizure of the gate itself was only prevented by the national guard, who checked the pursuit.* Meanwhile Barclay, having, by the aid of the Guards and grenadiers, at length dislodged the enemy from the heights of Pantin and Romainville, gave orders to suspend the attack in the centre, until the arrival of the army of Silesia on the right, and the corps of Giulay and the hereditary Prince of Würtemberg on the left, enabled the whole army to take the parts assigned them in the battle.

59. At eleven o'clock, standards and armed bodies of men were seen by the anxious crowds who thronged the heights of Montmartre around St Denis, which soon, widening and extending, moved steadily forward, till, like a huge black wave, they overspread the whole plain which stretches from thence to the capital. It was the vast host of the army of Silesia, which, dividing into two columns as it approached Montmartre, streamed in endless files, the one half towards La Villette, on the great road to the barrier of St Denis, the other in the direction of Neuilly, as if to turn that important post by the extreme French left. York and Kleist were on the great road, moving direct on Paris, Langeron on the allied right, moving to turn the enemy's flank. The defence of La Villette and La Chapelle was most obstinate. For four long hours Mortier's troops, with heroic resolution, made good their post against the constantly increasing masses and reiterated attacks of the Prussians; and it was not till Woronzoff brought up his iron bands of Russian veterans, with the 13th and 14th light infantry at their head, that the batteries which commanded the village were carried, and the French driven out. Meanwhile Marmont, being reinforced, again made dispositions for an attack on Pantin. Barclay upon that ordered the Prussian and Baden Guards to

march out and attack the enemy; and these splendid troops, led by their gallant colonel Alvensleben, rushed on the enemy with such impetuosity, that they were speedily broken and driven back almost to the barrier of Pré St Gervais. Such was the admiration which this charge excited in the breast of Alexander, who witnessed it, that with his own hands he took the cross of St George off the neck of the Archduke Constantine, who stood near him, and sent it to the Prussian commander while he and his troops were in the thick of a running fire. The flattering badge being put on his breast on the spot, the men set up a shout which was heard above all the roar of the battle.

60. At length, about one o'clock in the afternoon, the heads of the columns of the hereditary prince of Würtemberg arrived at the extreme allied left; and although Giulay's Austrians had not yet made their appearance, he immediately commenced operations. The wood of Vincennes was occupied almost without opposition; the castle blockaded; the bridge of St Maur, with eight guns, carried by storm, and the French driven back with severe loss to Charenton. Both wings having thus come up at last, the Emperor ordered a general attack along the whole line. The Allies formed, as at Leipsic and Arcis-sur-Aube, a vast concave, stretching from Charenton on the extreme left, to the neighbourhood of Neuilly on the right; the French a convex, and which was gradually falling back to the barriers. Langeron was ordered to carry Montmartre, cost what it might; while Raefiskoi and Prince Eugene, supported by Barclay's reserves and the grenadiers, again renewed the attack on the centre. This grand assault, now made with greatly superior forces, and at all points at the same time, proved entirely successful. The conquerors rushed forward in the order followed in the desperate assault of Ismael, and with as rapid success. In vain the French generals and officers did all in their power, by standing in front of their columns, and exposing themselves to the uttermost, to animate their men and lead them back

* One of these boys was overthrown into a ditch, where a Cossack had his spear uplifted to pierce him, when a Russian lancer, touched with his youth and valour, stayed his arm, saying, "Do not kill the young Frenchman."—Koch, iii. 472.

into action. Heroism and patriotism did their best to resist, but they did it in vain. An invincible spirit was roused among mankind; the Almighty fiat had gone forth, its instrument was the indignation of oppressed humanity, and France was to undergo the punishment of the Revolution.

61. Flashing in the rays of a brilliant sun, the Russian and Prussian colours were carried forward from one summit to another, till every obstacle was surmounted, and Paris lay at their feet. The Prussians, under the gallant Prince William, after a desperate struggle, carried the bridge over the canal of Ourcq, and expelled Mortier's men, at the point of the bayonet, out of La Villette. Charpentier's veterans of the Guard retired, furious with indignation, and still even in retreat keeping up a deadly and unquenchable fire on their pursuers. Pitchnitsky's division of the Russians carried the barrier of Pré St Gervais, and made themselves masters of seventeen guns which had been planted there; ten more yielded to the impetuous assault of the Prussian and Baden Guards; Prince Gortschakoff forced Charonne; the burying-ground at Mont Louis with eight, the battery of Ménilmontant with seven guns, were successively stormed; the inmost recesses of the wood of Romainville were the theatre of mortal conflict; the village of Bagnolet was forced at the same time by Mesenstoff. The external defences of the French centre, being thus all carried about the same time, the whole allied centre, amidst deafening shouts, converging together, rushed simultaneously into Belleville. Following up their successes, the advanced guards, with breathless haste, toiled to the summit of the Butte de Chaumont; the level plateau was speedily covered with troops; the splendid capital of France burst on their view; the cry, "Fire on Paris! fire on Paris!" arose on all sides, and, amidst cheers which were heard over the whole battle-field, twenty howitzers were brought forward, which speedily sent their bombs as far as the Chaussée d'Antin. The first shot was fired from a Russian battery of light artillery, which was

the last that evacuated Moscow; and on both occasions was under the direction of General Milaradowich.

62. All of a sudden the troops received orders to halt at all points, and it was soon known that a capitulation had been concluded. Joseph no sooner perceived that the allied armies were about to throw the French troops back upon Paris, than he authorised the marshals to enter into a capitulation. This injunction was given by Joseph at a quarter past twelve; but it was not till the plateau of Chaumont was stormed, and the Russian bombs began to fall in the city, that the French marshals rightly judged that the defence could no longer be prolonged. In fact, in half an hour more the French troops, driven headlong down the steep descent which leads from the plateau to the town, would have been irrecoverably routed, and the conquerors would have entered the gates with them. They, in concert, accordingly despatched an officer to the Emperor Alexander, who was on the summit of the hill of Romainville, to request an armistice. The Emperor answered, with dignity, that he acceded to the proposition, but on condition only that Paris was immediately surrendered. As the officer had no power to accede to such a condition, Colonel Orloff returned with him to Marshal Marmont, whom he found in the first line, with his sword drawn, encouraging his worn-out battalions. The terms were at once agreed to, and the French were immediately to evacuate all the positions without the gates, including Montmartre. Orders were soon after despatched in all directions to stop the firing. So warm, however, was the conflict, so exasperated were the soldiers on the opposite sides, that it was with great difficulty that they could be separated; the enthusiastic cheers of the Allies made the air resound over the adjacent parts of Paris; and when the firing ceased, the last sounds that were heard were from Curial's veterans of the Old Guard, who still shouted "Vive l'Empereur!"

63. To the loud roar of the artillery, the incessant clang of the musketry,

the cries and cheers of the combatants, now succeeded a silence yet more awful, during which the terms of the capitulation were under discussion, and the fate of six hundred thousand human beings depended on a few words from the Emperor of Russia. Meanwhile the French troops, in the deepest dejection, many of them with tears mingling with the blood on their cheeks, withdrew within the barriers. The allied columns, who had now all come up in great strength, and exulting in their triumphs, were immediately everywhere brought forward to the front, and formed a sublime spectacle. From the banks of the Marne to those of the Seine, on a vast semicircle of six miles, the troops rested on their arms. The different lines were placed near each other, so as to form a continued close array. Artillery bristled on all the heights, cavalry filled all the plains; a hundred thousand men, leaning on their arms, and three hundred pieces of cannon, with the matches burning, were ready to pour the vials of wrath on the devoted city. Alexander, with all his suite, rode on to the plateau of Chaumont; Paris lay spread like a map at his feet. The descending sun, which cast its rays over its vast assemblage of domes and palaces, seemed to supplicate him to imitate its beneficence, and shine alike upon the just and the unjust. He was not wanting to his glorious destiny.

64. But ere the terms could be agreed to, loud cheers, followed by a tremendous fire, were heard on the allied right. Montmartre was speedily enveloped in smoke; and for some time all were in suspense, watching the dreadful struggle, the last of the northern campaign, which was there going forward. In a quarter of an hour, however, the thunders ceased; the well-known Russian hurrah resounded through the air; Russian standards were descried on the summit of the hill: and soon the arrival of messengers announced, that before intelligence of the suspension had reached them, Count Langeron, ascending from the extreme right of the allied line on the side of Clichy, had carried

this stronghold by assault. Such was the vigour of the storm, that of thirty guns planted on the hill, twenty-nine were taken; and in ten minutes from the time when the attack commenced, the Russian colours waved on its summit, although the preparations for defence appeared so formidable that the brave Radzewitz, who led the assault, took leave of his brother officers, as advancing to certain death, before he entered the fire. No sooner was the hill carried, than Langeron chased the French back into Paris, and immediately brought up eighty-four guns, which were planted on its summit, pointed towards the capital. "So, Father Paris! you must now pay for Mother Moscow," exclaimed a Russian artilleryman, with the medal of 1812 on his breast, as he approached his match to the touch-hole of his cannon. As soon as the suspension of arms, however, was agreed to, a white flag was displayed from the telegraph on the top of Montmartre, the soldiers piled their arms, and the bands of all the regiments, advancing to the most elevated points around, made the air resound with martial and triumphant strains. By a singular coincidence, the last action in the war took place on an eminence which still bears its Roman name of the Hill of Mars, and where, fifteen hundred years before, St Denis suffered martyrdom, who first introduced Christianity into Northern Gaul.*

65. The battle of Paris, the last scene in this mighty drama, was also on the side of the Allies, and, considering the number opposed to them, one of the most bloody. They lost not less than 9093 men, of whom 153 were Würtembergers, 1840 Prussians, and 7100 Russians—a clear proof upon whom the weight of the contest had fallen, and with whom its principal

* Montmartre—Mons Martia. St Denis, the patron saint of France, suffered martyrdom there in the year 241. His remains, cast into the Seine, were raised by a pious widow near Chaillot, and interred in a wheat field, where the church of St Denis now stands, and the mausoleum of the kings of France has been constructed. — *THIERRY, Gaule sous la Domination Romaine*, ii. 321, 325.

glory should rest. They took eighty-six pieces of cannon on the field, two standards, and a thousand prisoners; and the guns of the national guard, seventy-two in number, were given up by capitulation. The French loss was much less severe, and did not exceed 4500 men. The reason of this great disproportion between the loss of the victorious and vanquished army, was not so much the strength of the French position, or the effect of their formidable heavy batteries on the allied columns, as the circumstance that Blücher did not receive his orders in time to make his attack on the right simultaneous with Rasfakoi's in the centre; and that the Prince-royal of Würtemberg did not come up till the very last attack, at two o'clock in the afternoon, after the battle had lasted eight hours. Thus, during the greater part of the day, the opposite sides were nearly equally matched in respect of number at the points engaged, though, when all their troops came up, the Allies were three to one. Nevertheless, the resistance of the French army, from first to last, was most heroic: they yielded their capital, in the end, only to the forces of banded Europe; and this day may justly be considered as adding another to the immortal wreath of laurels which encircles their brows.

66. "If the Allies were encamped," said Napoleon in the senate, on the 30th March 1813, "on the heights of Montmartre, I would not surrender one village in the thirty-second military division," (the Hanse Towns). On that day year—on the 30th March 1814—the Allies *were encamped* on the heights of Montmartre; but he was obliged to surrender, not a village in the north of Germany, but his crown and his empire. No sooner was the Emperor made aware, while on his return to Paris, that the Allies were approaching its walls, than he despatched on the 29th his aide-de-camp, General Dejean, from Dolancourt, to announce his immediate return to the capital; and to intimate that negotiations were renewed through the medium of Austria and Prince Metternich, with the

allied powers. Dejean had reached Mortier, after incredible exertions, about three o'clock, as he was bravely combating the Prussians in front of La Villette. The marshal immediately despatched a flag of truce to Schwartzemberg, with a letter written on a drum-head, intimating the resumption of the negotiations, and proposing an armistice. The allied generals, however, were too well informed to fall into the snare; and a polite answer was returned by the generalissimo, stating "that the intimate and indissoluble union which subsists between the sovereign powers, affords a sure guarantee that the negotiations which you suppose are on foot separately between Austria and France, have no foundation; and that the reports which you have received on that head are entirely groundless." The attempt to avert the evil hour thus completely failed, and it was shortly after that Marmont and Mortier jointly concluded the armistice for the evacuation of Paris.

67. Meanwhile Napoleon, every hour more alarmed, was straining every nerve to reach the capital. On the 29th the Imperial Guard and equipages arrived at Troyes late at night, having marched above forty miles in that single day. After a few hours' rest he threw himself into his travelling carriage, and, as the wearied cuirassiers could no longer keep pace with him, set out alone for Paris. Courier after courier was despatched before him, to announce his immediate return to the authorities of the capital; but as he approached it, the most disastrous intelligence reached him every time he changed horses. He learned successively that the Empress and his son had quitted Paris; that the enemy were at its gates; that they were fighting on the heights. His impatience was now redoubled: he got into a little post *calèche* to accelerate his speed; and although the horses were going at the gallop, he incessantly urged the postilions to press on faster. The steeds flew like the winds; the wheels took fire in rolling over the pavement; yet nothing could satisfy the Emperor. At length by great ex-

ertions he reached Fromenteau, near the fountains of Juvisy, only five leagues from Paris, at ten at night. As his horses were there changing at the post-house called Cour de France, some straggling soldiers who were passing announced, without knowing the Emperor, that Paris had capitulated. "These men are mad!" cried Napoleon, "the thing is impossible: bring me an officer!" At the very moment General Belliard came up, and gave the whole details of the catastrophe. Large drops of sweat stood on the Emperor's forehead: he turned to Caulaincourt and said, "Do you hear that?" with a fixed gaze that made him shudder. At this moment the Seine only separated the Emperor from the enemy's advanced posts on the extreme allied left, in the plain of Villeneuve St George; their innumerable watchfires illuminated the whole north and east of the heavens; while the mighty conqueror, in the darkness, followed only by two post carriages and a few attendants, received the stroke of fate.

68. Berthier now came up, and Napoleon immediately said he must set out to Paris. "Caulaincourt, order the carriage!" Unable to restrain his anxiety to get forward, he set out on foot, accompanied by Berthier and Caulaincourt, speaking incessantly as he hurried on, without waiting for an answer, or seeming to be conscious of their presence. "I burned the pavement," said he; "my horses were as swift as the wind; but still I felt oppressed with an intolerable weight: something extraordinary was passing within me. I asked them only to hold out four-and-twenty hours. Miserable wretches that they are! Marmont, too, who had sworn that he would be hewn in pieces rather than surrender! And Joseph ran off too—my very brother! To surrender the capital to the enemy—what poltroons! They had my orders: they knew that on the 2d April I would be here at the head of seventy thousand men. My brave scholars, my national guard, who had promised to defend my son—all men with a heart in their bosoms—would have joined to combat at my side.

And so they have capitulated!—betrayed their brother, their country, their sovereign, degraded France in the eyes of Europe! Entered into a capital of eight hundred thousand souls without firing a shot. It is too dreadful! That comes of trusting cowards and fools! When I am not there, they do nothing but heap blunder on blunder. What has been done with the artillery? They should have had two hundred pieces, and ammunition for a month. Every one has lost his head; and yet Joseph imagines he can lead an army, and Clarke is vain enough to think himself a minister; but I begin to think Savary is right, and that he is a traitor. Set off, Caulaincourt; fly to the allied lines; penetrate to headquarters, you have full powers; fly, fly!" He still insisted upon following with Belliard and the cavalry, who had already evacuated Paris; but upon the repeated assurances of that officer that the capitulation was concluded, and the capital in the hands of an army of a hundred and twenty thousand men, he at length agreed to return, rejoined his carriages, which he had preceded by above a mile, and, after ordering the retiring corps to take a position at Essonne, set out for Fontainebleau, which he reached at six in the morning.

69. While these mournful scenes were passing at the solitary headquarters of the French Emperor, very different was the spectacle which the victorious camp of the Allies exhibited. It was there universally known that the troops were to enter Paris on the following morning; and orders had been issued that all those who were to accompany the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia should appear in their gala dresses, and with their arms and accoutrements in the best possible order. In great part of the troops, especially the corps of Blücher's army, the clothing was almost worn out; hardly an entire uniform was to be seen; many of the men were arrayed in a motley garb, stripped from the dead bodies of their enemies or their allies. But the case was otherwise with the household troops of Alexan-

der, the Guards, grenadiers, and reserve cavalry. These superb corps had been kept by the Emperor throughout the whole three preceding campaigns in the highest state of discipline and equipment, and for this glorious *entrée* they decked themselves out with the utmost possible care. Incredible efforts were made by the men through the night, even after the fatigues of the preceding day, to gratify alike their sovereigns' and their own wishes on this memorable occasion. From having almost invariably, during the preceding campaign, marched and fought in their greatcoats, their uniforms were in their knapsacks, clean and dry, and their arms were burnished up with a vigour which soon rendered them as bright as when they left the esplanades of St Petersburg or Berlin.

70. Meanwhile the terms of the capitulation were the subject of anxious discussion in the Emperor's cabinet. It was conducted on the part of the French by Colonels Fabvier and Denis, on that of the Allies by Nesselrode and Orloff. To all the demands of the French marshals that Paris should be protected, its monuments intrusted to the care of the national guard, and private property preserved sacred, the Allies gave a ready consent; but a very serious difficulty arose, when it was proposed that the marshals with their followers should capitulate. To this they positively refused to accede, declaring that they would sooner perish in the streets; and as the Russian officers had no power to dispense with this material article, they were obliged to refer the matter to the Emperor, who agreed to abandon it. A discussion next arose as to the route by which the marshals should retire; the Allies insisting for that of Brittany, the French for any they might choose. This too was referred to the Emperor, who agreed to forego this condition also. The terms of the capitulation were at length finally adjusted at three in the morning; it being stipulated that the marshals should evacuate Paris at seven on the same day; that the whole pub-

lic arsenals and magazines should be surrendered in the state in which they were when the capitulation was concluded; that the national guard, according to the pleasure of the Allies, should be either disbanded or employed under their direction in the service of the city; that the wounded and stragglers found after ten in the morning should be considered prisoners of war; and that Paris should be recommended to the generosity of the allied sovereigns.

71. The municipal authorities of Paris, consisting of the two prefects of the department of the Seine, the mayor of the city, the chiefs of the national guard, and a few of its superior officers, thus abandoned to themselves, without any superior government to direct their movements, now deemed it high time to take steps for the preservation of the city. Accordingly a deputation, consisting of those elevated functionaries, set off at two in the morning for the headquarters of the allied sovereigns. They had no need of lamps to their carriages; the immense semicircle of watchfires through which they passed on the road to Bondy threw a steady light on the road, and first revealed to them the vast force by which the capital had been assailed. Proceeding rapidly on, they soon reached the headquarters, and at four they were introduced to the Emperor Alexander. They were received by him in the most gracious manner—"Gentlemen!" said the Czar, "I am not the enemy of the French nation; I am so only of a single man, whom I once admired and *long loved*; but who, devoured by ambition and filled with bad faith, came into the heart of my dominions, and left me no alternative but to seek security for my future safety in the liberation of Europe. The allied sovereigns have come here, neither to conquer nor to rule France, but to learn and support what France itself deems most suitable for its own welfare; and they only await, before undertaking the task, to ascertain, in the declared wish of Paris, the probable wish of France." He then promised

to take under his especial protection the museums, monuments, public institutions, and establishments of all sorts in the capital. Upon the request of the magistrates that the national guard should be kept up, Alexander, turning to the chief of the staff, asked if he could rely upon that civic force. The reply was, that he might entirely rely upon their discharging every duty like men of honour. The Emperor immediately replied that he could expect nothing more, and desired no other guarantee; and that he referred the details to General Sacken, whom he had appointed governor of Paris, and whom they would find in every respect a man of delicacy and honour.

72. Paris, meanwhile, was in that state of combined excitement and stupor which prepares the way for great political revolutions. The terrors of the people had been extreme during the battle; they trembled for the pillage, massacre, and conflagration, which they were told, by the placards posted by the police, awaited them if the Allies were successful; and they dreaded at least as much the unchaining the cupidity of the faubourgs and passions of the Revolution, by the proposal to arm the working classes, and prepare a national defence. While the struggle lasted, an immense crowd filled the Boulevards, and all the streets leading in to them on the north and east, composed of at least as many women as men, who manifested the utmost anxiety for the event, and evinced the warmest sympathy with the long files of wounded who were brought in from the heights. On the approach of evening, when the passage of artillery and ammunition waggons through the streets to the southward told but too plainly that the defence could no longer be maintained, the sentiment that Napoleon was overthrown, and that a change of government would take place, became universal. The partisans of a regency, under the direction of Marie Louise, who otherwise might have been numerous, were paralysed by her departure from the capital; and the Jacobins and republicans, long re-

strained under the empire, did not venture to declare themselves, from terror of the allied arms. Thus the Royalists, who had received some slight countenance at least from the allied headquarters, were the only party that ventured to act openly; and already some symptoms of their taking a decided part had appeared.

73. At the barrier of Monceaux, where a battalion of the national guards was ordered by the general to issue forth and combat with the troops of the line, the Duke of Fitzjames, a known Royalist leader, had stepped forward from the ranks, harangued the regiment, and persuaded them to disobey the order, upon the ground that it was contrary to the fundamental conditions of their institution to be sent beyond the barriers. After it was known that a capitulation had been agreed to, the activity of the Royalist committee was redoubled. All night they were in deliberation: in vain several of their members were arrested by the police; the general conviction that the authority of that hated body, and their host of ten thousand spies, by whom Paris and France had so long been governed, would soon be at an end, counterbalanced all their efforts; and it was determined to raise the Royalist standard openly in the capital on the following morning at nine o'clock. Accordingly, M. Charles de Vauvineux, on the Place Louis XV., read aloud to a small assembly of Royalists Schwartzberg's proclamation, issued the day before, and at its close, mounting the white cockade, exclaimed "VIVE LE ROI!" The number of his followers was only four, but they immediately rode through the neighbouring streets and Boulevards, repeating the ancient rallying-cry of France, and distributing white cockades to the people. A few gentlemen of the old families and the better classes joined them, but their numbers were still very inconsiderable; and towards the Porte St Martin and Rue St Antoine the Royalist emissaries were insulted by the people and seized by the police. The great body of the



inhabitants were congregated in the streets, and highly excited, but dubious and uncertain; anxious, but yet apprehensive: ready to receive an impulse, but incapable of originating it. Such is the end of revolutions.

74. In this state of agitation and uncertainty, morning arrived, and the *cortège* of the allied sovereigns began to make its appearance in the Faubourg St Martin, on their way to the capital. The Prussian cavalry of the Guard, preceded by some squadrons of Cossacks, came first; then the Prussian light horse of the Guard; next the Austrian grenadiers, then the Russian and Prussian foot-guards: the Russian cuirassiers and artillery closed the procession. Indescribable was the enthusiasm which the matchless spectacle excited in the minds of the soldiers and officers who witnessed the march. Precisely at eight o'clock the Emperor mounted his horse, and, traversing the vast array of soldiers who were drawn up to salute him in passing, arrived at nine at the commencement of the Faubourg St Martin. Already various pickets of Cossacks had traversed the Boulevards; the principal military points in the capital had been occupied by the Russians; the red Cossacks of the Guard were to be seen at the corners of the principal streets; their bizarre costume and Asiatic physiognomy had excited general alarm. But when the superb array of the household troops appeared, when the infantry thirty, and the cavalry fifteen abreast, began to defile through the faubourg, and the forces whom they had so often been told were cut to pieces or destroyed, were beheld in endless succession, in the finest order and the most brilliant array, one universal feeling of enthusiasm seized upon the multitude.

75. Every window was crowded; the roofs were covered with anxious spectators; the throng in the streets was so excessive that it was with difficulty the troops could make their way through them. Passing from the extreme of terror to that of gratitude, the Parisians gave vent in the loudest

applause to their astonishment and admiration. The proclamation of the allied sovereigns to the inhabitants of Paris, already given, [*ante*, Chap. LXXXVIII § 54, note], had been placarded in every part of the capital that morning; its conciliatory expressions were universally known, and had diffused a unanimous entrancement. The grand object of anxiety with all, was to get a glimpse of the Emperor Alexander, to whom, it was generally felt, their deliverance had been owing. When that noble prince, with the King of Prussia on his right, and Prince Schwartzberg and Lord Cathcart on his left, made his appearance, amidst a brilliant suite of varied uniforms, at the Porte St Martin, the enthusiasm of the multitude knew no bounds. Cries of "Vive l'Empereur Alexandre!" "Vive le Roi de Prusse!" "Vivent les Alliés!" "Vivent nos Libérateurs!" burst from all sides; and the universal transports resembled rather the incense of a grateful people to a beneficent and victorious sovereign, than the reception by the vanquished of the conqueror, after a bloody and desperate war.

76. Turning to the right at the Porte St Martin, the allied sovereigns passed along the Boulevard of the same name, and admired at the gate of St Denis the noble triumphal arch, inscribed "Ludovico Magno."* As they approached the Boulevard Italien, the aspect of the multitude, if possible still greater, was of a more elevated description: the magnificent hotels of that opulent quarter were crowded with elegantly dressed females waving white handkerchiefs, and cries of "Vivent les Bourbons!" were heard in every direction. Such was the enthusiasm with which the sovereigns were received as they defiled through the Boulevard de la Madeleine, that the people kissed their boots, their sabres, and the trappings of their horses; and many young women, of graceful exterior and polished manners, entreated the gentlemen in attendance to take them up before them

* "To Louis the Great."

on their horses, that they might obtain a nearer sight of their deliverers.* Alexander's manner was so gracious, his figure so noble, his answers so felicitous, his pronunciation of the French so pure, as to excite universal admiration. "We have been long expecting you," said one. "We should have been here sooner but for the bravery of your troops," was the happy answer of the Czar. "I come not," he repeatedly said, "as your enemy; regard me as your friend."

77. The sovereigns defiled past the then unfinished pillars of the Temple of Glory, now converted into the graceful peristyle of the church of the Madeleine; their triumphant hoofs rang in the Place Louis XV., on the

* I have been assured of this fact by both Lord Cathcart and Lord Burghersh, now the Earl of Westmoreland, who took a part in the procession, and themselves had a fair Parisienne, sometimes *en croupe*, at others on the pommel of their saddles, at the Place Louis XV. The English who entered Paris with the Allies were the Earl of Cathcart, Lord Stewart, Lord Burghersh, Sir Hudson Lowe, Colonel H. Cooke, the Hon. Major Frederick Cathcart, Captain Wood, Lieutenant Aubin, Lieutenant the Hon. George Cathcart, Lieutenant Harris, who brought the despatches to England, Thomas Sydenham, Esq., John Bidwell, Esq., and Dr Frank.—BURGHESSE, 254, note. Savary gives the same account of the Parisian ladies on this occasion. "There were to be seen ladies, and even ladies of rank, who so far forgot the respect due to themselves, as to give themselves up to the most shameful delirium. They threw themselves over the circle of horses which surrounded the Emperor of Russia, and testified an *empressement* more fitted to excite contempt than conciliate kindly feeling."—SAVARY, vii. 52.

spot where Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette, and the Princess Elizabeth had been executed; and, halting in the entrance of the *Champs-Élysées*, they beheld fifty thousand of their chosen troops defile before them, amidst the applause of the multitude, and through the space formed by the bayonets of the national guard of Paris, which kept the ground for the procession. "God!" said Monvel, in the church of St Roch during the fervour of the Revolution, "if you exist, avenge your injured name: I bid you defiance: you dare not launch your thunders; who will after this believe in your existence?" [*ante*, Chap. xiv. § 48]. "Lento gradu, ad vindictam, Divina procedit ira; tarditatem supplicii gravitate compensat."† The thunders of Heaven had now been launched; the Revolution had been destroyed by the effect of its own principles, and the answer of God delivered on the spot where its greatest crimes had been committed by the mouths of the Revolutionists themselves.

"Par ce terrible exemple, apprenez tous de moins
Que les crimes publics ont les dieux pour témoins;
Plus le coupable est grand, plus grand est le supplice.
Tremblez, peuples et rois, et craignez leur justice!"

VOLTAIRE, *Sémir.*, Act. v. scene 8.

† "The Divine wrath proceeds by a slow step to retribution: it compensates the delay of punishment by its weight."—ST AUGUSTINE.

APPENDIX.

CHAPTER LXXX.

NOTE A, p. 52.

NUMBER of different persons who were quartered in Dresden and its suburbs during the periods undermentioned, viz:—

	New Town.	Old Town.	Suburbs.	Friedrichstadt.	Total.
From 26th Feb. to 25th March 1813.	117,388	67,250	43,832	8,385	236,805
From 26th March to 7th May.	208,600	95,862	49,128	21,137	374,727
From 8th May to 14th June.	499,146	274,709	273,832	90,513	1,068,298
From 15th June to 15th November.	1,635,275	1,270,457	1,523,595	633,844	5,062,871
From 16th Nov. to 31st December.	280,375	162,646	110,068	61,160	614,249
From 1st Jan. to 31st Dec. 1814.	1,846,971	463,466	724,785	177,174	2,712,345
Total,	4,087,705	2,334,889	2,725,190	991,713	10,089,290

—ODELBREN, *Campaigns de 1813 en Saxe*, vol. ii. p. 287.

NOTE B, p. 52.

Three different approximate statements of the force of the French army received at the headquarters of the Allies:—

OPPOSED TO THE ALLIED GRAND ARMY AT DRESDEN.

	Aug. 19th.	Sept. 20th.	Sept. 24th.
Old Guard,	6,607	4,000	25,000
Young Guard,	32,000	24,000	3,000
Cavalry of the Guard,	10,500	6,000	
Vandamme,	25,000	4,000	6,000
Victor,	21,000	18,000	14,000
Marmont,	30,000	20,000	18,000
Poniatowski,	15,000	10,000	11,000
St Cyr,	31,000	20,000	20,000
Latour-Maubourg's cavalry,	10,000	6,000	7,000
Total,	181,107	112,000	104,000

OPPOSED TO THE NORTHERN ARMY UNDER BERNADOTTE.

	Aug. 12th.	Sept. 20th.	Sept. 24th.
Bertrand,	21,000	14,000	15,000
Reynier,	20,000	8,000	6,000
Oudinot,	24,000	10,000	18,000
Arrighi and Kellerman (cavalry),	10,000	7,000	6,000
Total,	75,000	39,000	45,000

OPPOSED TO BLÜCHER IN SILESIA.

	Aug. 12th.	Sept. 20th.	Sept. 24th.
Souham,	82,000	22,000	18,000
Lauriston,	85,000	10,000	8,000
Macdonald,	21,000	14,000	12,000
Sebastiani and Milhaud (cavalry),	18,000	8,000	5,000
Total on the right,	101,000	49,000	88,000
Total on the left,	75,000	89,000	45,000
Total at Dresden,	181,107	112,000	104,000
Grand total,	867,107	200,000	187,000

—BURGHESSE'S *War in Germany in 1813*, p. 816.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

NOTE C, p. 57.

HOLOGRAPH NOTES OF NAPOLEON ON PLANS OF THE CAMPAIGN AT DRESDEN.

First Note.—Position of the Enemy.

"It appears certain that the enemy's army of Silesia will move on Wittenberg, and that the grand army of Töplitz will make a movement to its left.

"The enemy's army of Silesia cannot be considered less than sixty thousand men, with the corps of York, Blücher, and Langeron.

"The army of Berlin, composed of a Swedish corps, a Russian corps, and the corps of Bulow and of Tauenzeln, can hardly be less.

"There will thus be upon the Lower Elbe an army of a hundred and twenty thousand men; it is doubtful whether it has not detached a body towards Hamburg.

"The army of Töplitz—composed of Austrians, a Prussian corps, and a Russian corps—cannot be considered less than a hundred and twenty thousand men. The project of the Allies, then, will be to march two large armies, one by the right, the other by the left, and to oblige the Emperor to quit Dresden."

Second Note.—Position of the French Army.

"The fourth and seventh corps, under the orders of the Prince of Moskwa, are on the Lower Elbe.

"The Duke of Ragusa, with the first corps of cavalry and the third of infantry, is at Eilenburg and Torgau. These two armies form, together, a force of eighty thousand men, covering the left.

"The first, the fourteenth, the second, the fifth, and the eighth, form a force of seventy thousand men, covering the right.

"Lastly, the eleventh, the Guard, and the second corps of cavalry, forming a force of sixty thousand men, are in the centre."

Third Note.—What should be done.

"It will be ascertained this evening, if all the army of Silesia, or only a part of it, has marched on Wittenberg.

"On the one or the other hypothesis, we may resume the offensive by the right bank, and move upon Torgau with the Guard and the eleventh corps; there join the second and third; and thus, with an army of a hundred thousand men, debouch from Torgau by the right bank, on the bridges of the enemy.

"All the corps which cover the right will retire before the enemy upon Dresden, as soon as they shall have perceived the movement, and, if necessary, give up Dresden to move upon Torgau."

Another Project.

"This project will consist in moving all the forces on Leipzig, and entirely giving up Dresden.

"For that object, the eleventh, the Guards, and the second corps of cavalry, will set out for Würtzchen; the third and fifth will move upon Coblenz; the first and the fourteenth will move upon Dresden.

"Having thus sacrificed the magazines, the fortifications, and the hospitals, we will try to beat the right wing of the enemy; and if we succeed, we will return to Dresden.

"If we do not succeed in beating the right wing of the enemy in consequence of their getting out of our reach, we will evidently be obliged to take the line of the Saale."

Third Project.

"Strengthen the left wing by the eleventh corps, and await the course of events in that position.

"Dresden, 5th October 1813."

Other Notes on the Situation of the Army.

"It is impossible to enter winter quarters at Dresden without a battle. There are two plans to follow.

"The one, to watch Dresden, and to seek an engagement; afterwards, to return there, and to find all things in the same position, if we conquer.

"The other, to leave Dresden entirely; endeavour to give battle; and, if we gain it, to return to Dresden, beating the Austrian army in Bohemia. We will then arrive only accidentally at Dresden; because, even after we have gained the battle, there is no Elbe during the winter, and it is hardly possible to carry on offensive operations; and then Dresden cannot be the centre of operations. It would much more naturally be at Leipsic, or at Magdeburg."

Movements on the First Plan.

"If we wish to preserve Dresden, it will be necessary to act in the following manner:—

"To intrust the guard of Dresden to the first and fifteenth corps.

"To leave the second, the fifth, and the eighth in observation at Chemnitz and Freyberg, and to give battle with the sixth, the third, the fourth, the seventh, the eleventh, and the Guard."

Movements on the Second Plan.

"It will be necessary to post, the day after to-morrow, the second, the fifth, and the eighth corps, the last at Altenburg, and not move on Dresden, holding Chemnitz, but as if they came from Leipsic; to march the first and the fourteenth on Dresden, to follow up the movement; or perhaps to bring up the first and the fourteenth, and to place them in like manner on the road from Nossen, near the heights of Waldheim, having their rear at Leipsic."

Difference of the two Plans.

"In the first plan, being obliged to leave the second and the fifth corps in the rear at Dresden, they may be reached by the enemy, who may move on Altenburg, and from thence may advance so quickly on Leipsic, that that town will find itself exposed; and the troops which will be left at Dresden can, by the slightest fault, be compromised; and, in place of evacuating Dresden, be driven from it.

"In the second plan, they may form in the end two armies, which may be placed in the natural order in which they happen to be, preserving the central position, to march either to the right or left.

"The Emperor having gone from Dresden, the first and fourteenth corps, the second and fifteenth, may not understand their position, and be unable to combine their operations, and may find themselves cut off.

"In the first plan, I have left the corps to guard Dresden; it is then necessary that his Majesty should undertake that business, and that he should remain either in Dresden or the environs. In that case they lose many opportunities on the left; it is even doubtful whether, his Majesty not being present in person, it would be advantageous to give battle. If we chance to lose it, the position will become such, that we shall be compelled to retire from the Elbe to the Saale."—*NORVINA, Portefeuille de 1813, vol. ii. p. 570.*

NOTE D, p. 65.

FRENCH ARMY AT LEIPSIC.

Right Wing.—Under the KING OF NAPLES.

					Infantry.	Cavalry
8th Corps, Prince Poniatowski, . . . . .	.	.	.	.	8,000	
2d Corps, Victor, . . . . .	.	.	.	.	16,000	
6th Corps of Cavalry, Kellerman, . . . . .	.	.	.	.		8,000

Centre.—Under the Emperor.

	Infantry.	Cavalry.
A Corps of	10,000	
5th Corps, General Lauriston,	9,000	
11th Corps, Macdonald,	15,000	
1st Corps of Cavalry, General Latour-Maubourg,		4,500
2d Corps of Cavalry, General Sebastiani,		4,500
5th Corps of Cavalry, General Milhaud,		8,000

Left Wing.—Under Ney.

6th Corps, Marmont,	18,000	
3d Corps, General Souham,	15,000	
7th Corps, General Reynier,	8,000	
3d Corps of Cavalry, Arrighi,		8,000

Behind Leipzig.

4th Corps, General Bertrand,	15,000	
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Reserve.

Old Guard, Mortier,	4,000	
Young Guard, Oudinot,	26,000	
Cavalry of the Guard, General Nansouty,		4,800

Grand total,	144,000	23,800
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166,800

Detached Corps.

The 1st and 14th Corps at Dresden, and the 18th Corps at Hamburg.

—VAUDONCOURT, *Campaigns de 1813*, p. 201.

N.B.—Plötho, Kausler, and the German writers, make the French forces 140,000 infantry and 35,000 cavalry; or, in all, 175,000, which is probably near the truth.—KAUSLER, 932.

ALLIED ARMY AT LEIPSIG.

Austrians under Schwartzberg:			
Hesse-Homburg,		20,000	
Meerfeldt,		20,000	
Klenau,		15,000	
Total,			55,000
Russians:			
Wittgenstein,		20,000	
Barclay de Tolly,		35,000	
Total,			55,000
Prussians:			
Kleist,		20,000	
Ziethen,		5,000	
Platoff,		5,000	
Total,			30,000
Army of Blücher:			
Langeron,		30,000	
York,		25,000	
Sacken,		15,000	
Total,			70,000
Corps of Gisors,			20,000
Total in the field on the first day,			230,000

Number of the Allies who fought on the 18th.

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Men.	Guns.
Army of Bohemia, Schwartzberg,	128,850	29,550	158,400	626
Army of Reserve, Benningsen,	23,000	5,000	28,000	132
Army of Silesia, Blücher,	46,000	10,000	56,000	356
Army of the North, Prince-Royal of Sweden,	36,450	11,000	47,450	270
Grand total,	234,300	55,550	290,450	1,384

—KAUSLER, p. 931.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

NOTE E, p. 119.

No. I.—Extract from the official state of the allied army, commanded by Lieutenant-General Sir John Murray, at the Col di Balaguer, 17th June 1813, exclusive of officers, sergeants, and drummers:—

	Present fit for duty.	Sick.	Command.	Horses.	Mules.	Total Men.
British and German cavalry,	739	13	6	788	..	757
British, Portuguese, and Sicilian Artillery,	783	8	197	862	604	990
British Engineers and Staff Corps,	78	5	86	..	..	119
British and German Infantry,	7,226	830	637	..	..	8,693
Whittingham's Infantry,	4,370	503	316	..	..	5,189
Sicilian Infantry,	935	121	272	..	..	1,378
Grand total,	14,181	1,479	1,466	1,095	604	17,126

No. II.—Extract from the original weekly state of the Anglo-Sicilian force commanded by Sir William Clinton, headquarters, Tarragona, 25th September 1813; exclusive of officers, sergeants, and drummers.

	Present fit for duty.	Sick.	Command.	Horses.	Mules.	Total Men.
Cavalry,	663	61	215	875	40	939
Artillery, Engineer, and Staff Corps,	997	67	53	507	896	1,122
Infantry,	9,124	1,390	1,019	115	429	11,533
Grand total,	10,784	1,518	1,292	1,497	1,365	13,594

—NAPIER'S *Peninsular War*, vol. vi. p. 704.

NOTE F, p. 126.

ANGLO-PORTUGUESE FORCE, ON 15TH OCTOBER 1813.

	Officers, Sergeants, etc.	Rank and File.	Total.
British and German Cavalry and Infantry,	5,859	87,250	43,109
Portuguese ditto,	4,253	21,274	25,527
Total sabres and bayonets, exclusive of sick and absent on command, }	10,112	58,524	68,636
Artillerymen and Drivers,			4,000
Grand total,			72,636

ANGLO-PORTUGUESE FORCE, ON 16TH OCTOBER 1813.

	Officers, Sergeants, etc.	Rank and File.	Total.
British and German Cavalry and Infantry,	5,856	39,687	45,043
Portuguese ditto,	2,990	23,237	26,227
Total sabres and bayonets, exclusive of sick and absent on command, }	8,846	61,924	70,270
Artillerymen and Drivers,			4,000
Grand total,			74,270

—*Morning Star*, 15th and 16th October 1813.

NOTE G, p. 143.

SIR ROWLAND HILL'S FORCE AT THE BATTLE OF ST PIERRE.

SECOND DIVISION.

	Officers and Squads.	Rank and File.	Total.
British,	802	5,871	6,173
Portuguese,	277	2,331	2,608
Le Cor's Portuguese Division,	507	4,163	4,670
Total under arms, exclusive of Artillerymen,	1,586	11,865	13,451

—NAPIER's *Peninsular War*, vol. vi. p. 706.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

NOTE H, pp. 157, 158.

BUDGET OF GREAT BRITAIN FOR THE YEAR 1814.

PERMANENT REVENUE.

Customs,	£8,680,068	
Excise,	19,451,102	
Stamps,	5,826,868	
Land and assessed taxes,	7,889,064	
Post Office,	1,799,206	
Pensions, one shilling in the pound,	19,504	
Salaries, sixpence in the pound,	11,992	
Hackney coaches,	24,081	
Hawkers and pedlars,	15,910	
Total permanent and annual duties,		£42,724,210
Small branches of the hereditary revenue,		123,666

EXTRAORDINARY RESOURCES.

Customs,	£3,345,670	
Excise,	6,401,097	
Property Tax,	14,814,101	
Arrears of Income Tax,	1,205	
Lottery, net profit (of which one-third part is for the service of Ireland),	334,853	
Moneys paid on account of the interest of loans raised for the service of Ireland,	3,534,255	
On account of balance due by Ireland, on joint expenditure of the United Kingdom,	2,770,000	
On account of the Commissioners for issuing Exchequer bills for Grenada,	60,200	
On account of the interest of a loan granted to the Prince-regent of Portugal,	57,170	
Surplus fees of regulated public offices,	119,226	
Imprest money repaid by sundry public accountants, and other moneys paid to the public,	121,220	
Total, independent of loans,		£75,412,873
Loans paid into Exchequer, including the amount of those raised for the service of Ireland,		86,078,047
Grand total,		£161,491,920

—*Annual Register* for 1815, p. 322.

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE.

1. For interest, &c. on the permanent debt of Great Britain unredeemed, including annuities for lives and terms of years,		£40,776,530
2. Interest on Exchequer bills,		2,256,707
3. Civil List,	£1,028,000	
4. Other charges on the Consolidated Fund, viz:—		
Courts of Justice,	74,487	
Mint,	16,923	
Allowances to royal family,	368,048	
Salaries and allowances,	67,559	
Bounties,	6,168	
		1,561,125
5. Civil government of Scotland,		114,032
6. Other payments in anticipation of Exchequer receipts—		
Bounties for fisheries, manufactures, corn, &c.,	244,808	
Pensions on the hereditary revenue,	27,700	
Militia and deserters' warrants,	138,494	
		410,502
7. The Navy—	11,334,907	
Victualling department,	5,774,585	
The transport service,	4,862,074	
		21,961,566
8. Ordnance,		4,480,729
9. The Army, viz:—		
Ordinary services,	16,582,945	
Extraordinary services and subsidies,	27,237,234	
		43,820,179
Deduct the amount of remittances and advances to other countries,	10,024,628	
		83,795,556
10. Loans, &c., to other countries, viz:—		
Ireland,	8,723,985	
Austria,	£1,475,682	
Denmark,	121,917	
France,	231,731	
Hanover,	739,379	
Holland,	267,759	
Oldenburg,	10,007	
Portugal,	1,500,000	
Prussia,	1,330,171	
Russia,	2,555,473	
Sicily,	316,666	
Spain,	536,333	
Sweden,	800,000	
Miscellaneous,	88,995	
	£10,024,618	
		£18,748,608
11. Miscellaneous services, viz:—		
At home,	1,937,018	
Abroad,	447,573	
		2,384,591
Deduct sums which, although included in this account, form no part of the expenditure of Great Britain:—		126,489,941
Loan for Ireland,	£8,723,985	
Interest at one per cent and management, Portuguese loan,	57,170	
Sinking Fund on Loan to the East India Company,	130,307	
		8,901,962
Total expenditure,		£117,587,979

—Annual Register for 1815, p. 342.

NOTE I, p. 173.

TROOPS FURNISHED BY THE CONFEDERATION OF THE RHINE
TO THE ALLIES.

SECOND CORPS.		FIFTH CORPS.	
Oldenburg,	1,500	Wurtsburg,	2,000
Hanover,	20,000	Darmstadt,	4,000
Brunswick,	6,000	Frankfort and Isenburg,	2,800
Bremen,	8,000	Reuss,	450
	<u>35,000</u>	Nassau,	1,680
			<u>10,930</u>
THIRD CORPS.		SIXTH CORPS.	
Kingdom of Saxony,	20,000	Württemberg,	12,000
Duke of Saxe-Weimar,	2,800		
Schwartzburg,	650	SEVENTH CORPS.	
Anhalt,	800	Baden,	8,000
	<u>24,250</u>	Hohenzollern,	250
FOURTH CORPS.		Lichtenstein,	40
Hesse-Cassel,	12,000		<u>8,290</u>
Berg,	5,000		
Waldeck,	400		
Lippe,	650		
	<u>18,050</u>		

—KOECH, *Abregé de Traité de Paix*, x. 357, 358.

NOTE K, p. 173.

FORCES OF THE ALLIES ON ENTERING FRANCE.

I. GRAND ARMY OF SCHWARTZENBERG.

Austrians.

	Battalions.	Squadrons.	Batteries.	Cavalry Regts.	Cannon.
1. The 1st Light Division of Count Bubna,	5	80	3	..	24
2. The 2d Light Division of Lichtenstein,	5	18	2	..	16
3. The 1st Corps of Colloredo,	27	12	8	..	64
4. The 2d Corps of Lichtenstein,	21	12	8	..	64
5. The 3d Corps of Giulay,	25	18	7	..	56
6. The Corps of Frimont,	11	26	6	..	48
7. The Corps de reserve of Prince Hesse-Homburg,	26	40	26	..	100
8.	8	..	..	..	..
Total,	128	151	60	..	372

Russians and other Allies.

	Battalions.	Squadrons.	Batteries.	Cavalry Regts.	Cannon.
9. The first Allied Corps, or the fifth Corps d'Armée of Wrede,	30	80	12	..	76
10. The seventh Allied Corps, or the fourth Corps d'Armée of Prince Württemberg,	15	12	4	..	24
11. The Russian or sixth Corps d'Armée of Witt- genstein,	23	20	7	5	72
12. The Russian reserve of the Archduke Constantine,	35	72	15	21	116
13. The Prussian Guard,	8	8	8	..	24
Total,	239	296	101	26	684

—PLOTOW, vol. iii. Appendix, pp. 13, 14, 15.

Summary of the Grand Army.

Austrians,	130,000
Bavarians,	25,000
Württembergers,	14,000
Russians, { Wittgenstein's corps,	19,350
{ Reserve,	82,200
Prussian Guard,	7,100
Guards of the Grand-duke of Baden,	1,000
The sixth Allied Corps,	13,000
The eighth Allied Corps,	10,000
Württemberg's reserve,	10,000
Total of the Grand Army,	261,650

II. THE ARMY OF THE NORTH.

Under the Command of the Crown-Prince of Sweden.

	Battalions.	Squads.	Batts.	Cannon.	Pioneer Companies.	Cossack Regts.	Men.
1. The 3d Prussian Corps of Bulow,	45	50	12	96	2	..	30,000
2. The Russian corps of Winsingerode,	35	30	14	162	..	19	30,000
3. The 3d German Corps d'Armée,	32	15	..	56	..	2	30,000
4. Walmoden's Corps, . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	15,000
5. The Swedish Army,	28	32	9	62	..	..	20,000
6. The 2d German Allied Corps,	32	16	4	..	..	..	30,000
Total of the Army of the North, . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	155,000
7. Dutch troops, . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	10,000
8. English troops under Graham, . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	8,000
9. Danish infantry, . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	10,000
							184,000

—PLOTTO, iii. Appendix, pp. 29, 40.

III. THE ARMY OF SILESIA.

	Men.	Batts.	Squads.	Batteries.	Cannon.	Pioneer Companies.	Cossack Regts.
1. The first Prussian Corps d'Armée of York,	18,931	31½	64	13	104	2	..
2. The second Prussian Corps d'Armée of Kleist,	20,000	37	44	14	112	2	..
3. The Russian Corps d'Armée of Langeron,	38,310	43	23	12	136	5	7
4. The Russian Corps d'Armée of Sacken,	21,150	26	24	7	84	1	8
5. The fourth German or Hessian Corps d'Armée,	20,000	25	12	4	32	..	..
6. The fifth German or Duke of Coburg's Corps,	24,000	20	11	5	40	..	3½
Grand total,	137,391	182½	163	55	508	10	18½

Summary of the Army of Silesia.

Prussian troops,	88,931
Russian troops,	54,460
German Allied troops,	44,000
Total,	137,391

—PLOTTO, iii. Appendix, p. 26.

IV.—THE ARMY OF RESERVE.

	Men.	Batts.	Squads.	Batteries.	Cannon.	Pioneer Companies.	Cossack Regts.
1. Russian reserves under Benning- sen,	50,000	63	74	18½	156	5	10
2. The fourth Prussian Corps d'Ar- mée under Tauenzeln,	50,000	64	53	17½	100	..	..
3. Prussian reserve Corps in West- phalia, under Prince Hesse- Homburg,	20,000	21	12	2	..	1	..
Carry forward,	120 000	148	144	33	256	6	10

	Men.	Batts.	Squads.	Batteries.	Cannon.	Pioneer Companies.	Cavalry Regts.
Brought forward, . . .	120,000	148	144	33	256	6	10
4. The Russian army of reserve under Prince Labanoff, . . .	80,000	..	..	..	..	..	..
5. Blockading Corps before Glogau, . . .	15,000	..	..	..	..	..	..
6. Austrian reserve under the Grand- duke of Württemberg, . . .	20,000	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total of the Army of Reserve, . . .	235,000	148	144	33	256	6	10

—Plotno, iii. Appendix, pp. 41, 50.

Summary of the whole Allied Armies.

1. The Grand Army under Marshal Schwartzberg, . . .	261,000
2. The army of Silesia under Marshal Blücher, . . .	137,000
3. The army of the North under the Crown-Prince of Sweden, . . .	174,000
4. The Italian Army under Marshal Bellegarde, . . .	80,000
5. The army of reserve, . . .	235,000
Grand total, . . .	887,000
Of which there were,—	
230,000 Austrians, { In the first line, . . .	210,000
{ In the second line, . . .	20,000
278,000 Russians, { In the first line, . . .	136,000
{ In the second line, . . .	62,000
{ In the third line, . . .	80,000
162,000 Prussians, { In the first line, . . .	76,000
{ In reserve, . . .	86,000
179,000 German Allied troops.	
20,000 Swedes.	

Total, 887,000

This does not include the Dutch infantry, 10,000 strong.

—Plotno, iii. Appendix, p. 50.

NOTE L, p. 179.

COMPOSITION AND STRENGTH OF THE FRENCH ARMY.

	Artillery.	Infantry.	Cavalry.
I. Imperial Guard under Marshal Mortier,—			
1. Old Guard—			
One division of infantry under General Frenant, . . .		6,000	
One division of cavalry under General Desnouettes, . . .			2,400
2. Young Guard—			
Infantry—Division Christiani, . . .		3,500	
Division Rothenburg, . . .		6,000	
Division Boieldieu, . . .		6,000	
Division Ségur, . . .			1,600
Division Colbert, . . .			1,600
Division Nansouty, . . .			1,600
II. Infantry of the line, . . .			
The second corps, Victor, . . .		8,000	
The third corps, Ney, . . .		8,000	
The sixth corps, Marmont, . . .		7,000	
The seventh corps, Oudinot, . . .		12,000	
The eleventh corps, Macdonald, . . .		7,000	
The first reserve division, Charpentier, . . .		3,000	
The second reserve division, Laval, (from Spain), . . .		3,000	
The third reserve division, Amez, . . .		3,000	
The fourth reserve division, Payol, (National Guard), . . .		3,000	
III. Cavalry of the line, . . .			
The first corps, Grouchy, . . .			3,000
The second corps, Sebastiani, . . .			3,000
The fifth corps, Milhaud, . . .			3,000
The eleventh corps, Exelmans, . . .			3,000
Dragoon division, Briche (from Spain), . . .			3,000
IV. Artillery, under Drouot, . . .	8,000		
Grand total, . . .	8,000	75,500	22,200

SUMMARY.

			Artillery.	Infantry.	Cavalry.
1. Guard—28,700 men,	.	.	.	21,500	7,200
2. Infantry,	.	.	.	54,000	..
3. Cavalry,	.	.	.	..	15,000
4. Artillery,	.	.	8,000	..	..
Total,	.	.	8,000	75,000	22,200

Detached.

1. The first Corps under Maison in Belgium,	.	.	.	20,000
2. The army of the South under Marshal Augereau at Lyons,	.	.	.	80,000
3. The thirteenth Corps under Marshal Davoust in Hamburg,	.	.	.	20,000
4. The army of Italy on the Adige, under Beauharnais,	.	.	.	50,000
5. The army of the Pyrenees and of Aragon under Soult and Suchet,	.	.	.	90,000
Garrisons in France,	.	.	80,000	
Garrisons in Holland and the Netherlands,	.	.	50,000	
Garrisons in Germany,	.	.	50,000	

GENERAL SUMMARY.

I. In France—				
The Grand Army under Napoleon,	.	.	.	105,700
The Army of the South under Augereau,	.	.	.	80,000
The Armies of the Pyrenees and of Aragon under Soult and Suchet,	.	.	.	90,000
Garrisons in France,	.	.	.	80,000
II. In Holland and the Netherlands—				
The first corps under Maison,	.	.	.	20,000
Garrisons in Holland and the Netherlands,	.	.	.	50,000
III. In Germany—				
The thirteenth corps under Davoust,	.	.	.	20,000
Garrisons in Germany,	.	.	.	50,500
IV. In Italy.				
The Army of Italy under Beauharnais,	.	.	.	50,000
Grand total of French forces,	.	.	.	496,200

—PLOTTO, iii. Appendix, pp. 65, 68.

END OF VOL. XI.



